Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/memoirsofdukeofs02sulliala

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

Engraved by E. Scriven.

HENRY THE FOURTH.

Sully's Mem^s. Vol. 2^d

Published 1810 by W. Miller, London.

8458

THE

MEMOIRS

OF

THE DUKE OF SULLY,

PRIME-MINISTER TO

HENRY THE GREAT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

CHARLOTTE LENNOX.

A NEW EDITION,

REVISED AND CORRECTED; WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES, SOME
LETTERS OF HENRY THE GREAT,

AND

A BRIEF HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

EMBELLISHED WITH PORTRAITS.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM MILLER, ALBEMARLE-STREET;
BY W. BULMER, AND CO. CLEVELAND-ROW, ST. JAMES'S.
1810.

DC
122.9
S9A3E
v.2

MEMOIRS OF SULLY.

BOOK VII.

1594 to 1596.

I. Henry dissatisfied with the duke of Bouillon, and why. The motives for Rosny's journey to Sedan: his conversation with Bouillon, in which he penetrates into his designs, and discovers his real character.—II. Taking of Laon. Military expeditions in different parts of the kingdom, betwixt the king's party and that of the League. Designs of the duke of Maïenne upon Burgundy. Death of the cardinal of Bourbon; death of the superintendant d'O; his character; character of the dutchess of Guise; the duke of Guise makes a treaty with the king; Rosny's apology for this treaty. Services performed by the duke of Guise for his majesty. Character of Sancy. The story of Alibour.—III. Changes made in the council of the finances; maxims and reflections relating to the finances. Henry declares war against Spain, contrary to Rosny's opinion; he is wounded by John Châtel; particulars of this horrid attempt, and the banishment of the Jesuits.—IV. The motives which determine Henry to march into Burgundy. Rosny quarrels with the council of the finances. Desertion of the count of Soissons; Rosny insulted by the count's officers. A campaign in Picardy; The French defeated at Dourlens. Death of admiral Villars.—V. Campaign in Burgundy glorious for Henry IV.; battle of Fontaine-Françoise. Conditions upon which the Pope gives absolution to Henry. The conduct of cardinal d'Ossat examined. Henry goes to Picardy; losses sustained there by France. The duke of Montpensier reveals to the king the plots of the chief noblemen of the kingdom. Bouillon is sent to London. Jealousy and hatred of the council of finances against Rosny.

I. I QUITTED the camp before Laon immediately after the skirmish which is related in the conclusion of the preceding book; some difficulties which arose

270147

in the treaties, particularly that with the baron de Medavy, obliging me, in obedience to his majesty's orders, to take a journey to Rouen, which was followed by a second to Paris, and another, of more importance than either, to Sedan.

The duke of Bouillon gave daily new occasions of discontent to the king; when through his influence, he married the heiress of Sedan, he promised to bring his majesty a certain number of troops; but he not only neglected to perform this promise, but also retained, without asking the king's permission, the troops which he had lent him to guard his frontier till he should be in peaceable possession of his new principality; nor did he make any excuse whatever for not sending them back, or give the king any account of the situation of his affairs. His new rank had inspired him with the vanity of making himself be looked upon in Europe as a formidable potentate. This, which he could not hope from so weak and confined a state as his was, he sought to obtain by every kind of artifice and intrigue in the neighbouring courts. All the malecontents in Europe were sure of finding a protector in him, and he was the main spring that gave motion to the cabals of Auvergne and d'Entragues.

One day, when the king sent for me so early in the morning that I found him in bed, having only Ozeray and Armagnac in his apartment, and when we were all consulting upon measures to prevent the dangerous designs of so many secret enemies, his majesty dwelt in particular upon the duke of Bouillon, and seemed greatly affected with his ingratitude, after having conferred an obligation on him which ought to have bound him for ever to his interests. Indeed, the king, by marrying him to mademoiselle de Bouillon, had given him a proof of friendship so much the stronger, since in doing so he had acted against his own judgment, and the advice of all those to whom he had mentioned it. The next day after this conversation, Beringhen presented a gentleman to the king, in his chamber, who brought him a letter from Bouillon, in which the duke informed his majesty of the death of his wife, and excused his delay, by the grief and perplexity into which her death had thrown him. This letter likewise gave the king to understand, that the dutchess de Bouillon had left a will, in which she bequeathed the principality of Sedan and all her property to her husband, and put them under the protection of the king of France, because it was expected, that her relations would give the duke of Bouillon great trouble about this donation. "That is to say," said the king, when he had finished reading the letter, "the "duke of Bouillon has great occasion for my assist-"ance: Is not this a very honourable way of pro-"ceeding?"

To humble and punish the duke, his majesty was strongly inclined to leave him to struggle alone against these difficulties; but the native sweetness of his disposition, and the remembrance of the duke's former services, still influenced the king in his favour. He answered the duke by a compliment of condolence upon the death of the dutchess of Bouillon; and assured him of his willingness to assist him. If the king had thought that this last mark of his friendship would have recalled and fixed the duke of Bouillon for ever in his duty, the commission of him whom he sent with this letter would have ended in barely delivering it to the duke; and any inconsiderable person might have sufficed for that purpose: but Henry, accustomed to confer benefits only on the ungrateful, would make this deputation answer several purposes. He turned towards me, and told me, that in his opinion I was the properest person to carry this letter, because if it was not sufficient to make Bouillon adhere constantly to his duty, the arguments of a man, who had a right to represent it to him strongly, might perhaps accomplish it; and thus, if neither produced the desired effect, it was necessary to penetrate into the duke's secret designs, and to examine carefully the will, and the supposed donation of the dutchess de Bouillon.

This embassy seemed too like that which had drawn the hatred of the princess, and the count of Soissons upon me; and my first emotions upon receiving it were caused by my grief that the king's service generally engaged me in such affairs. Henry, who guessed part of my thoughts, forgot nothing which he imagined capable of lessening what was disagreeable in this commission: he told me, that the success which fortune seemed to annex to all affairs wherein I was employed, as a reward due to my fidelity, induced him to choose me, in preference to any other, to transact this business: that none of my services were lost upon him: and that he took extremely kind the attention I always shewed to avoid or break off any connexions which were capable of diminishing my zeal for him. Speaking these words, he embraced me tenderly, adding, with a kindness that went to my heart, that he earnestly intreated me to be careful of my own security, since I should be obliged to pass through places subject to the Guises; and to preserve myself for a prince who loved me. Princes who behave in this manner cannot be too faithfully served.

It happened very fortunately that I was at this time well provided with money, having sent for remittances from Rosny and Moret, where my wife was; I therefore saw myself in a condition to satisfy without delay, the king's impatience for my departure. Three hours after I had received this order, I went to Bruyeres, where my equipage lay, and, followed by five and twenty troopers well armed, in four days I arrived, without meeting with any accident, within view of Sedan. The duke being informed of my journey, came to meet me as far as the village of Torcy, which separates his little state from France; there he alighted, and assumed a melancholy air to receive my compliments, and to read the king's letter. He loaded me with personal civilities; seemed charmed with the choice his majesty had made; and persisted (notwithstanding my repeated solicitations) to treat me as an ambassadour. I was conducted to very magnificent lodgings, and all the expenses of my retinue defrayed. The duke shewed me, with great complaisance, the fortifications he had raised about his castle of Sedan, by which, he assured me, it would be impregnable. I was not of the same opinion; all the expense he was at to strengthen this place could not supply the defect of its situation.

The siege of Laon, of which the duke enquired some news, afforded us matter for entering into a more particular conversation. After reiterated assurances of his attachment to the king, he asked me, if the many subjects of complaint which his majesty had received from the Spanish Low Countries had not determined him to carry the war thither; and spoke to me of this project, as an affair he ardently wished to see executed. He dwelt much upon the advantage of this war; upon the manner in which the provinces of Luxembourg, Liege, and Namur might be attacked; upon the correspondences which, with this view, he carried on in the principal cities of Flanders; and upon the powerful assistance he offered to lead thither. It was not difficult to believe, that he had used his utmost endeavours to promote a war, of which all the advantage would be his; but it was far from being so with the king: his interest was not concerned in it; and with regard to him, this fine project was a mere chimera. Indeed the duke, fearing that it would be treated with contempt at court, omitted nothing which he thought might bring me to approve of it, by painting it in the finest colours, and with an air of disinterestedness capable of imposing upon me. After having thus discoursed upon Flanders, he entered into politics, and displayed all the powers of his eloquence in proving to me, that, it being the king's chief interest to depress the house of Austria, he could never attain this end but by keeping up a strict union with the Protestants. The king's late abjuration, he supposed, was but a necessary ceremony, which had only changed him in appearance, and which he thought to prove sufficiently, by two or three strokes of raillery upon some superstitious practices of the devout Catholics, upon the mendicant monks, and the equivocations of the Jesuits. Here the duke stopped, like one who was afraid to explain himself too freely, and looked at me earnestly with a feigned inquietude. Hitherto I had listened to him without interruption, and discovered, without his perceiving it, all the ideas which rose in his ambitious mind. But many things still remained to be known, for which it was only necessary to let him speak awhile longer, for it is not possible that a man, who is at once extremely vain and loquacious, should not in the end, betray all his secrets; I therefore forced a smile into my countenance, and assumed the air of one filled with admiration at his judgment, his policy, and his eloquence. The duke's self-love thus agreeably flattered, he did not wait for much intreaty, but resuming his discourse, he went on to make me sensible of the true interest of the Protestants, in the situation affairs were at present in France. Here it became necessary for me to supply, by my own surmises, what he left unsaid, because the duke of Bouillon's expressions suffered a little from the constraint he laid himself under, either through fear of falling into some indiscretion,* or that he thought the affectation of a mysterious air did more honour to himself and the party, or indeed, that his discourse was built on a system so sublime, and ideas so abstracted, that he was lost in them as well as myself.

I recalled the duke from this too elevated flight; and he told me in plainer terms that the Protestants were so much disgusted at the king's conversion, that he could allay their apprehensions no otherwise than by declaring war against Spain conjointly with them; that, unless this were done, it would be impossible to persuade them that they were not made a sacrifice, and for the future would be always exposed to the violences of the French Catholics acting in concert with the pope and the Spaniards. This piece of intelligence, from the proof he brought of it, it is probable the duke himself thought as false as it really was. He said that Villeroi was commissioned by the dukes of Lorrain, Maïenne, and Mercœur, to propose to the king, who was then at Fontainbleau, this union between France and Spain; and that the pope would not have refused the king his apostolic benediction, with a bull, acknowledging him king of France, but because he would have this pretended union the preliminary. To this proof Bouillon added others equally groundless, by which he thought to make it appear, that the Catholics had wholly estranged the king from the Protestants, and had prevailed upon him to use them with great injustice. The grievances of the Protestants thus established, the duke was willing to inform me of the remedy they had thought proper to apply to them. They were preparing, he said, to fortify immediately all their strong towns, to choose a leader out of the kingdom, and to establish within it (but the place he did not name) a general council for the affairs of religion, to which all the different churches were to address themselves, and which was to determine, in the last resort, all the affairs of the ten other provincial councils, into which the Calvinist part of France was to be divided; and that the power of this sovereign council might be absolute and uncontested, a protector, or foreign prince, was to be put at its head, capable of making it respected.

---

* The true character of the duke de Bouillon is thus given us: "On set purpose he used to express himself," says the writer of his life, "in so dark and perplexed a manner, that he could give to "what he spoke any sense that he pleased. He pretended that "there were some nice conjunctures, in which a man must either "be silent, or follow his manner of speaking." Another maxim of the duke de Bouillon, according to the same writer, was, "That "a man ought to be very cautious of giving any thing under his "hand. A man interprets what he has spoken as he pleases; and "he agrees only to so much of it as he thinks proper, retrenching "more or less. He approves or disapproves as he thinks conveni"ent. But the case is not the same with regard to what is written," &c. M. de Sully was of a quite contrary opinion. We may find some politicians, who will not condemn the duke de Bouillon; but none who does not commend the duke de Sully.

Whilst he was talking of these subjects, the duke of Bouillon, according to the occasion he had to dazzle, convince, or deceive me, assumed successively the character of a friend and ally of the king, a good Protestant, or a mere relator of facts, but always that of a man consummate in the politician's art, and the depositary of all the secret affairs of the Protestants. He could not, however, involve himself so well in mystery, but that I comprehended plainly enough, that all these schemes of high and low councils, these regulations so particularised, might very probably have their rise in the duke's own brain, and not in the synods of St. Maixant, and St. Foi, as he would have had me believe. This foreign prince-protector, especially, seemed to me to be entirely his own invention, and in reality himself, who gave his own views for determined schemes, and whose sole end (for what springs will not ambition put in motion?) was perhaps merely this; that, by communicating these designs to the court, as if the Calvinists had really formed them, and were ready to put them in execution, I should raise the king's indignation against them; and by this artifice he would oblige the Huguenots to take such a resolution as he wished, but with which he durst not openly inspire them, this was, to choose him for a leader whom the hatred and complaints of the Catholics pointed out to them as a defender. All that happened in the sequel has but the more confirmed me in this belief.

After having thus, as he imagined, made me subservient to his designs, the duke reflected that he should lose more than he gained, if the king, of whose assistance he stood in need, should entertain any suspicions disadvantageous to him; he therefore reserved a most refined stroke of policy for the last. This was, to assure me, that these proposals had indeed been made him, but that, far from approving them, or offering his assistance, he had done every thing in his power to prevent such designs taking place, in which he had not had the good fortune to succeed. Can any thing be imagined more treacherous and crafty? Certainly, if the duke of Bouillon was able to flatter himself, that these arts would leave me in absolute ignorance of the affairs of the Protestants, and the dispositions of the seditious, he could not hinder me from perceiving at least some of his own particular sentiments with regard to the prince whom he betrayed.

I could no otherwise answer a discourse so full of artifice, than by confining myself to plain and simple truths, which is the most effectual way to disconcert these so curiously-disguised politicians. I assured him, in few words, that the king was not, nor never would be, changed with regard to the Protestants; that he was willing to grant them all the advantages they could reasonably demand, but that the present situation of his affairs would oblige him to defer some time longer those testimonies of his friendship: that his majesty had not forgot any of the causes of hatred which Spain had given him; and that he would always preserve a lively resentment of them, even if he were not to enter into the common concern of Europe, to put a stop to the design of the house of Austria for universal monarchy; but that, in order to secure success, it was necessary that all should be quiet within his kingdom, since it might be expected that Spain would defend herself in a different manner, when she saw herself directly attacked, than she had done in a war wherein she had only engaged as an auxiliary.

I told the duke de Bouillon, that I readily believed all he had said to me with regard to himself, since he must be sensible that the principles of honour, justice, and gratitude, pointed out to him too plainly the conduct he ought to observe with the king, to leave him a possibility of mistaking it. He however refused me the troops I demanded for Henry, nor would he permit me even to peruse madam de Bouillon's last will, saying, that she had sealed it in a casket, and exacted a promise from him, that he would not open it but with the usual forms of law, if any one should question the validity of it; and that she had afterwards obliged him to confirm this promise with an oath. It was not difficult for me to comprehend that any remonstrances would be useless; my commission being therefore now completed, I resolved to return immediately to Laon.

I was greatly surprised, on my arrival at the camp, to meet the king, who was going to hunt, passing so near the walls of Laon that he was within musquet-shot of them; but I was soon informed that both sides had laid down their arms, the besieged having capitulated upon condition to surrender in ten days, if within that time they were not assisted by an army, or at least if a reinforcement of eight or nine hundred men were not thrown into the place. Henry made me keep close beside him during the chase, that he might hear all the particulars of my journey. When I told him that the duke of Bouillon refused to shew me the will of the deceased dutchess, he replied, that he knew from thence what he ought to think of the bequest.* He entertained the same opinion of the duke of Bouillon that I did; "He "offers," said he, "to be a mediator in disturbances "which he himself has been the author of." Nor was he less displeased at his refusing to send the troops he demanded: but in the present conjuncture it was necessary that his majesty should dissemble all these occasions of discontent with the duke; and therefore, in public, he seemed to be very well satisfied with his conduct, and determined to maintain him in Sedan. With respect to the war with Spain, which I was commissioned to propose to him, he deferred deliberating on it till another time, when he intended to do it in full council.

---

* In order to destroy the suspicions which the whole of this account might raise as to the reality of the bequest of the dutchess of Bouillon, I will give you what the duke de Bouillon's biographer says on this head. "By her last will," says he, "she appointed "the duke de Bouillon, her husband, her sole heir. It was currently reported that, notwithstanding this last will of the dutchess, "the succession would be contested with her husband: the truth "is, Charles de la Mark, the count de Maulevrier, uncle to Char-

II. The count of Sommerive, du Bourg, and Jeannin, finding it impossible to prevent the

---

"lotte de la Mark, alleged that this succession belonged to him, "and that she could not dispose of it, in favour of her husband, to "his prejudice. The duke de Montpensier pretended likewise, "that the sovereignties of Bouillon, Sedan, Jamets, and Raucourt, "could not be contested with him; as he had been substituted "therein by Robert de la Mark, the last duke of Bouillon. The "duke de Bouillon thought it more eligible to accommodate "matters with these two claimants, than to engage in a law-suit, "which would divert him from the execution of his grand designs: "the accommodation was concluded; and the sovereign jurisdiction "of Bouillon, Sedan, and Raucourt, remained in property to him." Hist. de Henry Duc de Bouillon, par Marsollier, tom. II. liv. iv. This historian likewise speaks of the duke de Sully's journey to Sedan, and of the protection which Henry IV. offered the duke de Bouillon on this occasion. But here we cannot but observe, that it would have been much better not to quote, on this subject, Sully's Memoirs, than to disguise their sense, and conceal, as he has done, the objection that arises from the text of these Memoirs; and this so much the rather (it would be to no purpose to dissemble it, after all that has been said of it, and very lately, by Amelot de la Houssaye, in his Memoirs, in the article Bouillon la Mark), so much the rather, I say, as Henry IV. and the duke de Sully, are not the only persons who seem to doubt of the reality of such bequest.

insurrection of the citizens and the garrison of Laon, who were incensed against them as tyrants who had rendered their domination insupportable, thought proper to yield before the time prescribed for delivering the city to the king. They had no longer any hopes of assistance, after the misfortune which happened to a reinforcement the duke of Maïenne endeavoured to throw into the place. This reinforcement coming too late near Laon, to have any hopes of surprising the besiegers, thought it best to wait for night in the wood, where they kept themselves concealed all day. The king hunting in that part of the forest at the same time, his dogs discovered the ambuscade; the enemy, although eight or nine hundred in number, instead of shewing themselves, or attacking the king, who had only three hundred horse with him, thought they should be able to avoid an absolute discovery by separating, the better to conceal themselves: but the dogs still continued to pursue them, and the king's troop arriving in the mean time, they were surprised in so great a disorder, that our footmen and servants only, without any assistance from the three hundred horsemen made themselves masters of them, and plundered them entirely.

After the surrender of Laon, the king judged it necessary to take a journey to the frontiers of Flanders; his chief inducement to it being the hopes that many of the cities in that part would surrender to him at his approach. The event did not answer his expectations; and his majesty drew no other advantage from his journey, than confirming in their allegiance Amiens, Abbeville, Montreuil, Peronne, and several other cities, into each of which he made a solemn entry. I can say no more here of these transactions, the king's service calling me at that time to Paris upon affairs of less importance than the former, and which for that reason I shall not enter into a particular detail of, any more than of what passed in the different provinces of the kingdom. The reduction of Morlaix, and Quimper, by marshal d'Aumont,* with the assistance of the English forces;† the building of Fort du Croisic, by the duke of Mercœur, at the head of his Spaniards, to be a check upon Brest, were the most considerable exploits of the two parties in Brittany. Savoy, Piedmont, Provence, and Dauphiné, continued to be the theatre of a war always favourable to Lesdiguiers, against the duke of Savoy, notwithstanding the defeat and taking of Crequy.‡

The duke of Maïenne, seeing Laon taken, almost all Picardy in the king's party, the chief officers of the league, and the duke of Guise himself, disposed to treat soon for an accommodation with his majesty yielded at last to the advice of the president Jeannin,§ who had long pressed him to fix himself in one particular province, and there make powerful efforts in time, to render himself independent; so that, after fortune had subjected all to the king, which he doubted not would soon happen, he might at least have a secure retreat to shelter him in his reverses.

---

* He was killed the following year when besieging Comper, by a cannon-ball, which broke his arm to shatters; being upwards of seventy years of age: he said no more when he found himself wounded, than these words, *I have got it*. He was generally esteemed, and generally regretted. See his eulogy in M. de Thou, b. cxiii.

† The English forces were commanded by Sir Thomas Baskerville, in the absence of Sir John Norris, who had come over to England, to inform Elizabeth of the state of affairs in Brittany. See Camden. Edit.

‡ Charles de Crequy, son-in law to Lesdiguiers coming to the relief of Aiguebelle, besieged by the duke of Savoy, was defeated and taken prisoner. This did not happen till 1598.

§ I know not if the author does not here a little too lightly tax this president: at least it has been said that more than two years before, at his return from Spain, he had been the first to advise the duke de Maïenne to come to an agreement with the king; as being disgusted at the haughtiness and excessive vanity with which the king of Spain, in treating with him, had said, *my town of Paris, my town of Orleans*, as if France had actually been his own.

Burgundy was the province fixed upon by the duke of Maïenne;* and he marched thither with his forces, after placing good garrisons in Dourlens, La-Fere, and Soissons. Besides his being already in possession of great part of this province, its contiguity to Savoy, Franche Comté, Lorrain, Switzerland, and Germany, from whence he hoped to draw great supplies, was a farther inducement for him to establish himself there. The pope and the emperor seemed to enter into his views: he might strengthen his right of conquest, by a resignation in form which Spain would grant him so much the more willingly, as by that means she would revive a claim upon Burgundy, long since suppressed, but never wholly renounced. All these probable advantages made it be believed by many persons, that the ancient kingdom of Burgundy was upon the point of being restored. The duke of Maïenne's conduct in those parts, the remaining part of this year, and till the month of April in the following, supported this opinion; and I had less reason than any other to doubt of his intention in this respect, after the letters I saw at Paris, in the hands of the cardinal of Bourbon.

But, unfortunately for the duke of Maïenne, the Burgundians were not disposed to make choice of a subject for their master: they never before gave such convincing proofs of their fidelity to their sovereign. The duke of Guise beginning with endeavours to secure Beaune, by throwing a strong garrison into it, the burgers rose against them, defeated them, and forced them to shut themselves up in the castle: and, as they might still suffer great inconveniencies from them, they fortified themselves with barricadoes against the castle, and invited marshal Biron to come to their assistance, permitting him to lodge his little army six weeks within their walls. They afterwards attacked the castle in form, with a battery of twelve pieces of cannon, and carried on their works so vigorously, that they at last drove out the garrison of the league. I shall give an account hereafter of the expeditions in Burgundy; at present I must leave them, to return to the affairs of the capital.

---

* The duke of Maïenne was governor of this province.

I perceived the cardinal's illness to increase so much every day, that, not doubting but his end was very near, I staid at Paris to give the king immediate notice of it. He died without making that disposal of his benefices* which he seemed to have so ardently desired. His majesty was afflicted at his death, having lost a good kinsman and an affectionate subject. He wrote to me, that he was tired with the importunity of several persons who coveted the cardinal's spoils; and that, to get rid of them, his general answer was, that they were already disposed of. His designs with regard to these benefices were as follows: in the agreement with the abbé de Tiron, certain abbeys belonging to the chancellor and the governor of Pont de l'Arche were yielded to him, for which those two gentlemen demanded large indemnifications out of the benefices of the deceased cardinal. The king was desirous that the abbé de Tiron should release these abbeys to the proprietors, and receive in exchange for them the archbishopric of Rouen, valued at thirty thousand livres a year, but charged by the king with the payment of a pension of four thousand crowns, which he had promised to the chevalier d'Oise,* retaining for himself Gaillon-house, which he designed to purchase from the abbé; and ordered me to prevail upon him to accept of this equivalent. As for the abbey of St. Ouen, one of the finest benefices the deceased cardinal had possessed, the king, as yet, had not bestowed it on any one; and he had the goodness to tell me, that he would not do it without charging it with a pension of ten thousand livres payable to me.

---

* He was archbishop of Rouen, abbé of St. Denis, of St. Germain-des-Pres, of St. Ouen and St. Catherine of Rouen, of Orcamp, &c. De Thou represents him as a prince who loved the sciences; he was eloquent, mild, and of an agreeable disposition, but extremely weak. He died on the 28th of July.

The greatest difficulty I met with in managing the king's affairs at Paris, was to communicate his prudent œconomy to the directors of his finances, the superintendant especially. The abuse of suffering the finances to become a prey to favourites (an evil, the source of which may be traced back to the reign of Charles VIII.) had in this last reign increased to such a degree, that had a man of the greatest industry, prudence, and integrity imaginable, been at the head of the finances, he perhaps would not have been able to prevent the bad consequences of so prodigious a dissipation: and, unhappily, d'O† possessed none of these qualities.

---

* George de Brancas Villars, brother to admiral de Villars.

† Francis d'O, lord of Fresnes, Maillebois, &c. first gentleman of the bed-chamber, governor of Paris and the isle of France, superintendant of the finances, &c. "He surpassed kings and princes in "extravagance and prodigality; for, even to his suppers, he had "pies made of musk and amber served up, that amounted to twenty-"five crowns." Journal de l'Etoile, ann. 1594, p. 37.

His disposition, naturally leaning towards profusion, indolence, and voluptuousness, had been wholly ruined by all those vices for which the court of Henry III. was famous, deep play, unbounded debauchery, expensive follies, domestic disorders, and extravagances of every kind. D'O was on a footing with Bellegarde,* Souvrai, Villequier, Quélus, Saint-Luc, Maugiron, Saint-Mégrin, Livarrot, Joyeuse, Epernon, la Valette, du Bouchage, Thermes, and many other less declared favourites: and the title of minion was all the recommendation he had for a post which the most careless princes think fit, for their own interest, to except from those with which they reward such sort of servants.

Such was the man by whom the finances were conducted at a time, when, minions and mistresses being excluded from the council, one would have expected they should have been put under other management: and what is still more surprising, the king, in his most urgent occasions, had not even the privilege of dividing his own revenues with the superintendant. D'O did not scruple to let him lose a city or a governor for the want of a very inconsiderable sum of money, while at the same time he denied none to his own pleasures. Lieramont,* governor of Catelet, applied to me, to solicit from d'O the payment of his garrison: I thought the affair of such importance, that I subdued my reluctance to ask a favour of him, and acquitted myself of my commission, but with little success. The superintendant, after I left him, said to messieurs d'Edouville† and de Moussy, that he had rather see this place in the hands of Spaniards than Protestants (Lieramont was of that religion). Moussy, who was my kinsman, repeating this discourse to me, I declared to the superintendant, that he should be answerable for the place, if it were lost for want of this payment; but this menace had little effect on him. A short time after this M. d'O was seized with a retention of urine, of which he died in a few days; and it is worthy of observation, that this man, who was possessed of more than four millions, or rather of all the money in the kingdom, which he disposed of almost absolutely; more splendid in his equipages, his furniture, and his table, than the king himself, was not yet given up by his physicians, when his relations, who had always seemed to bear him great affection, his domestics,‡ and some others, under the title of creditors, pillaged him with such eagerness, and so completely, that a long time before he expired there was nothing left but bare walls in the chamber where he lay,§ as if fortune thought fit to finish with him at least by an act of justice.

---

* Roger de St. Larry de Bellegarde—Gilles de Souvrai—René de Villequier—Jacques Levis de Caylus or Quélus—Francis d'Epinai de St. Luc—Francis de Maugiron, Paul Stuart de Caussade, sieur de St. Megrim—Jean d'Acres de Livarrot—Anne de Joyeuse—John Louis and Bernard de Nogaret—Henry de Joyeuse, count de Bouchage, afterwards a capuchin—John de St. Larry de Thermes, or Augustus baron of Thermes—Tho. Souvrai had been one of Henry the Third's favourites, he should not be ranked in the number of this prince's minions: he was a man of acknowledged merit and probity. Henry III. said, that if he were neither king nor prince, he would gladly be Souvrai. He refused the commission with which Henry III. would have charged him, to assassinate the marshal de Montmorency, when in prison. De Thou, b. lxi.

---

* Francis de Dampierre, sieur de Lieramont or Liermont.

† . . . . sieur d'Edouville, ... Boutillier, sieur de Moussy.

‡ He had no children by Charlotte Catherine de Villequier, his wife. " Henry IV. playing at tennis with M. d'O, made him ob-" serve that the marker stole their balls, and afterwards called to " him with a loud voice, ' d'O, you see that all the world cheats " us.' " Le Grain, b. vii.

§ " If," says M. de Grillon, " each must give in his accounts

The king returned to Paris to treat of a truce, which the duke of Lorrain earnestly requested; and of an accommodation with the duke of Guise, who solicited it through the dutchess* of Guise, his mother, the king's cousin-german, and mademoiselle de Guise, his sister. It must be confessed, that of all those persons who had been in arms against the king, the duke of Guise deserved most indulgence. To the common motives of religion and independence, which seemed to authorise all things, he joined that of a father assassinated by the command of the present king's predecessor. It was madam de Guise, his mother, whose persuasions chiefly induced him to take this step: she was continually representing to her son, that the revolt of the princes and nobility of the kingdom, which in the beginning was justified by religion, became criminal

---

" above, I believe that poor d'O will find himself much at a loss to " find good documents for his. It was said that he died very much " in debt, more than he was worth; and that there were five and " twenty or thirty officers in his house when he expired. The trea- " surers regretted him extremely, and called him their father: it " was even said, that three of them gave each fifty crowns to Collot " to encourage him to dress him properly. M. le Grand, his good " friend, was almost distracted for his loss; for he allowed him " every year one hundred thousand franks to spend. Madame was " not at all sorry for it, because he almost starved her: the Protes- " tants regretted him as little, for he wished them no good. Madam " de Liancourt mourned for him, because she could do with him as " she pleased; and he kept her in favour with the king.—M. Se- " guier, the dean, who assisted him to the last, as likewise did his " brothers, repeated to him, as he was dying, *Have mercy on me,* " *O God!* Some of the last words he spoke were, Remember me " to his majesty; he will know better, after my death, wherein I " have been of service to him, than he did while I lived." L'Etoile, ibid.

* Catherine of Cleves, wife to the duke of Guise who was assassinated at Blois—Charles of Lorrain, duke of Guise.

after Henry had removed the only obstacle that could hinder him from enjoying his right of inheritance to the crown.

In any other age, which had not, like this, lost every distinction between virtue and vice, this woman, from the qualities of her heart and mind, would have been the ornament of her sex. Her whole conduct was regulated by a natural rectitude of soul, which shewed that she had not even the idea of evil, either to follow, or to advise it: and she was at the same time of so sweet a disposition, that she never was subject to the smallest emotion of hatred, malignity, envy, or even ill humour. No woman ever possessed so many graces of conversation, or added to a wit so subtil and refined, a simplicity so artless and agreeable. Her repartees were full of acuteness and sprightliness; and the pleasing, as well as greater qualities, were so happily blended in her composition, that she was at once tender and lively, tranquil and gay. It was not long before the king became perfectly well acquainted with the character of this lady; and from that moment he not only forgot all his resentment, but also behaved towards her with all the familiarity and frankness of a sincere friend. He consented to give the necessary passports to the sieurs de la Rochette, Pericard, and Bigot, whom the duke of Guise sent to propose his demands; and, wholly subdued by the intreaties of the two ladies, he named, on his side, three agents to treat with the duke: these were the chancellor de Chiverny, the duke de Retz, and Beaulieu-Rusé, secretary of state.

These three persons, to shew their great skill in negociating, began at first by using all those tricks and artifices which policy has unseasonably introduced in the place of that frank and open conduct, which, without deceiving any one, would produce the same effect. Their conferences lasted ten successive days; yet at the end of this time the smallest preliminary was not settled. Madam de Guise, who was tortured by these affected delays, came one day into the king's apartment, when his majesty did me the honour to converse with me, holding me by the hand, and turning the conversation upon the treaty with her son, she complained to the king, with her usual gracefulness, but mingled with a little impatience, that he had employed three men, "who go," said she, "three different roads to "reach no end; the first, by never saying more "than these words, *We must consider; we must advise; let us do better;* the second, by not understanding himself, although he speaks continually; "and the third, by never ceasing to find fault." This was, in reality, the true character of the three negociators. This worthy woman, suffering herself to be wholly transported by her zeal for the king, and tenderness for her son, seizing his majesty's hand, which she kissed, notwithstanding Henry's endeavours to the contrary, she conjured him to receive the returning allegiance of the duke of Guise, and give her the consolation of seeing her family restored again to the favour of their king. She spoke with an effusion of heart so strong and lively, that the king, affected by it even to tears, could not help answering, "Well cousin, what is it "you desire me to do? I will refuse you nothing." "All I desire," replied she, "is, that you will name "the person whose hand your majesty holds, to treat "with my son." "What!" returned the king, "this "wicked Huguenot? Truly, I grant it you very "willingly, although I know that he is your kins-

"man, and that he has a very great friendship for "you." That very moment he took away the cognizance of this affair from the three commissioners, and caused a commission, under the great seal, to be given to me, not only for settling the treaty with the duke of Guise,* but also for the affairs of the whole province of Champaigne. It may be easily imagined, that after this the chancellor bore me no good-will; but it is the part of an old and artful courtier to appear so much the more obliging and respectful to those who are in favour, as the resentment he harbours against them in his heart is great and lasting. Chiverny,† indeed, knew better than any other person how to act the courtier.

The duke of Guise had begun with very extravagant propositions, which, if he had insisted upon, would have rendered a treaty with him impossible. Doubtless, he was induced to make them, through his knowledge of the persons to whom he was referred: he thought, that to obtain something he must demand a great deal. He claimed no less than the post of high steward of the king's household, which must have been taken from the count of Soissons, who had been in possession of it ever since the assassination of the duke of Guise; to possess the government of Champaigne, which had likewise been given to the duke of Nevers; to enjoy also the benefices of his uncle, the cardinal of Guise, particularly the archbishopric of Rheims, then possessed by M. du Bec, a relation of madam de Liancourt, the king's mistress. There were also several other articles; but these three gave rise to the greatest difficulties. The duke of Guise, being informed of the change of the commissioners, resolved immediately to lessen the extravagance of his demands; and wrote to the dutchess, his mother, and to his agents, to conclude a treaty with me upon reasonable conditions, and even at any price whatever. He had about this time a new inducement to finish the treaty as soon as possible, which I was quite ignorant of: he had discovered that the city of Rheims (the most considerable present he had to offer the king), designing to make a merit of returning voluntarily to its obedience, had solicited the rest of the province to do the like, and had already drawn great part of it into its views. The duke of Guise, to prevent this inconvenience, having attempted to place a garrison there, the inhabitants declared that they would guard the city themselves; and this refusal causing a debate, they answered the duke's menaces by others no less haughty.

---

* See M. de Thou, b. cxi. who gives himself some share in this accommodation with the duke of Guise.

† Philip Hurault de Chiverny, chancellor of France, died in 1599, aged 72.

After the second conference I had with the duke's agents, there was no mention either of the post of high steward of the household, of the government of Champaigne, or of the benefices; and those three obstacles being removed, I saw very little difficulty remaining. I had proposed to the king, the idea which I had conceived of drawing the duke of Guise from Champaigne, and settling him in Provence, by giving him that government as a recompense, in order that his own interest there uniting him with Lesdiguieres, and Ornano, who supported the king's party in that province against the duke of Epernon, they might at once join to reduce the power of that formidable subject. The king consented to this so much the more willingly, as by the manner in which the family of Guise acted with him, he judged he might depend upon their fidelity; and he ordered me to conclude with him upon this plan. I made the proposal to the duke's agents, and, in consequence of reiterated commands from his majesty, I used so much diligence in settling all the other matters, that the next evening the treaty with the duke of Guise was concluded and signed by me in the name of the king, and by madam de Guise, and the duke's three commissioners, for him.

The next day six deputies from the city of Rheims arrived at Paris; on being referred to me, they told me that the king needed not bestow any great rewards upon the duke of Guise, not only because Rheims was no longer in his power, but because the inhabitants were ready to deliver him up to the king. They did not require to be introduced to his majesty, but said that they would be satisfied with his approbation in writing, or mine only, submitting it to the king to grant them afterwards what recompense he should think fit; and concluded with offering me, according to custom, a present of ten thousand crowns, which I neither could, nor would accept of. I thanked them, in the king's name, for their good-will; and assured them that he would, with great pleasure, receive this testimony of it. I deferred giving them an answer till I had conferred with his majesty, to whom I went immediately to relate all that had passed. I found the king in his closet, from whence he made every one but Beringhen depart, and listened to me as he walked backward and forward, often shaking his head, and smiling, through a reflection on the natural levity and inconstancy of the people. He afterwards took me aside to the window, and desired me to tell him what terms I was upon with the duke of Guise.

As soon as I had informed him that the treaty was concluded, he did not hesitate a moment whether or not he should observe it; but he would not, however, appear insensible to the affection of the city of Rheims. I introduced the deputies to him, whom he thanked as became a king, bestowing upon them a very considerable reward, with so gracious an air, that they returned full of joy and admiration.

The treaty with the duke of Guise being, with the usual form, signed by Gêvres* for the king, the dutchess and mademoiselle de Guise requested his majesty's permission for the duke to come himself, and assure him of his obedience. I wrote to him to seek for no other security than that permission: and he made no scruple to comply with my injunctions. He assembled as many of his friends as he could, and came and threw himself at the king's feet, with so many marks of a sincere repentance, that the king, who penetrated into his inmost soul, instead of reproaches, or a silence which on such occasions is even more terrible, made use of all his endeavours to encourage him: he embraced him three several times, honoured him with the name of nephew, treated him with the greatest tenderness and freedom, and, without affecting either to avoid or recall what had passed, mentioned the deceased duke of Guise with honour. He said that they had been friends in their youth, although often rivals for the same ladies; and that the duke's good qualities, and a conformity of disposition, had united them in a fixed aversion to the duke of Alençon. One friend, who endeavours to reconcile himself to another after a slight quarrel, could not have behaved otherwise; and all those who were witnesses of this reception could never sufficiently admire a king, who, with so many qualities to inspire fear, employed only those that created love.

---

* Lewis Potier de Gêvres, secretary of state. From him is descended the branch of the Gêvres; and from Nicolas Potier de Blancmenil, his elder brother, that of Novion.

The duke of Guise, absolutely gained by this discourse, replied, that he would neglect nothing to render himself worthy of the honour his majesty did the memory of his father, and the sentiments he was pleased to entertain of himself: and from that time he took such care to convince him that his respect and fidelity to him would continue inviolable, that the king, forgetting all that any other, in his situation, could have apprehended from a branch of a family which had made kings tremble, lived with him familiarly, and admitted him with the other courtiers into all his parties of pleasure: for such was the character of Henry, that that exterior gravity, which the royal dignity makes it necessary to assume, never hindered him from resigning himself up freely to pleasures which an equality of conditions spreads over society. The truly great man knows how to be by turns, and as occasions require, whatever he ought to be, master or equal, king or citizen: it is no diminution of his greatness to unbend himself in private, provided he shew himself, in his public character, capable of performing all the duties of his high station: the courtier will never forget that he is with his master.

Madam de Guise entering the king's apartment some days after, when the duke of Guise presented the napkin to his majesty for a slight repast which he made in the afternoon, she again took occasion to express her gratitude to him for his goodness to her son, and told him, with a lively emotion, that if ever the duke of Guise were deficient in his duty and obedience, she would disinherit him, and disown him for her son. The king, running to embrace her, assured her that he, on his side, would ever preserve for the duke, and his whole family, the tenderness of a father.

The treaty I had just concluded with the duke of Guise did not fail to be loudly exclaimed against. His own particular enemies, and that class of people which swarm about a court, who have no other business than to decry the conduct of persons in place, united themselves against me, and being secretly supported by those from whom the cognizance of this affair was taken, proclaimed every where, that I undertook this commission only to gratify madam de Guise. The duke of Epernon was not silent on this occasion; and whenever the duke of Guise and he were mentioned together, he constantly said, that I had offended the one without cause, to oblige the other against all reason. These discourses were so often repeated to the king, that he was at last made to believe I had acted with rather too much precipitation: however, he was not displeased with me on that account.

It was not difficult for me to justify myself; which I did by an apology in writing, and presented it to the king. I there defended my conduct by the following arguments: That the king could not possibly grant the three articles before mentioned, without giving disgust to a great many other persons; notwithstanding which, he would have been obliged to grant them, if he had not had a government to bestow upon the duke, which was the least recompense he could expect, after resigning Champaigne, and yielding up so many other claims: that with regard to the government which was given him, no other could be chosen, from whence fewer bad consequences might be feared, than from

Provence;* for upon a supposition that the duke of Guise might hereafter become capable of forgetting the new oath of allegiance he had taken, there was little danger to be apprehended from him in a province which had no communication with Lorrain, the Low Countries, nor Burgundy especially: moreover, by not granting any of the duke's demands, except the continuing him in the government of Champaigne, the danger of perpetuating the war in those countries was incurred: That it was the king's interest to reserve to himself the power of bestowing the government of Champaigne upon a man who should be not only sincerely attached to his service, but whose integrity likewise should be so well known, that the rebels in Burgundy might despair of ever bringing him to favour their views. With regard to the conveniency of fixing upon Provence for the duke of Guise, I added that argument relating to the duke of Epernon, which I have already touched upon. I recalled to the king's remembrance, in a few words, the many occasions of complaint this man had given him, his repeated revolts, his intrigues to disengage all the Catholics from his majesty's party, his insolent boast that he would never acknowledge any superior in his government, his last proceedings at the siege of Villemur, and many other circumstances which certainly would do no honour to the history of this proud subject. It was opposing one leader of the league to another, whom a thousand motives, besides that of his own interest, which ought always to be regarded as the most powerful, threw into a system quite contrary to his former views.

---

* The government was afterwards taken from him by cardinal Richelieu; who likewise took that of Picardy from the duke d'Elboeuf, and that of Burgundy from the duke de Bellegarde.

Without dwelling upon the orders his majesty had given me with regard to the duke of Guise, nor the danger of a longer delay; although the treaty with him had not been so advantageous as it was easy to prove it was, I represented to the king, that he could not act rigorously towards a man who had so steadily refused all the offers and most flattering promises of Spain, the dukes of Savoy and Lorrain, and the other enemies of the state,* to prevail upon him to continue a war, which, however short a time it had lasted, would have been a greater inconvenience to him, than all he had granted to the duke of Guise. Nor ought it to be thought a matter of little consequence (whatever his and my enemies could say) to gain over a man whose name and birth would always procure him a powerful party. I agree with them, if they please, that this nobleman made, after all, but an inconsiderable sacrifice of unjust claims, and uncertain expectations; nay, I will reduce it lower, and ascribe it all to the king's generosity; yet, if by that means he bound to his interest, not a single man only, but a family respectable for their alliances, their riches, and influence, it cannot be called an useless act of generosity.

The king was struck with these reasons, and seemed greatly surprised at my exact knowledge of Epernon. He did not think it proper to permit this writing to be made public, because of the truths it contained, which it was not yet time to reveal. I submitted, without any difficulty, for I never gave myself much trouble about the efforts of envy, having always looked upon that passion as an incurable disease. The whole of the duke of Guise's future conduct made a still better apology for me: he began his government by so clear and absolute a declaration of his sentiments, that the seditious were deprived of all hopes of ever being able to seduce him; and in all occasions wherein the king's service, or the good of the state, required his assistance, he behaved with equal firmness and prudence. The reduction of Marseilles,* which was with reason thought one of the best strokes of that kind, was his work; and with the help of Lesdiguieres, and the countess of Sault, he so well humbled the haughty Epernon, that he at last obliged him to restrain his rebellious disposition; and this proud subject was seen to submit to the king's mercy, and become one of his most assiduous courtiers.

---

* The duke of Guise was hated by the league, especially since the time he had killed with his own hand, in a tumult, the sieur de St. Paul, his field lieutenant, who was much beloved by them.

I am ready to do justice to the duke d'Epernon, and I do it most willingly. I shall always be among the first to enhance the value either of his personal services, or those of his soldiers, at Limoges, Saint-Germain, Villebois,† Chartres,

---

* This town was upon the point of being delivered up to the king of Spain, by two of its burgesses, named Charles Casault, and Lewis d'Aix; when the duke of Guise found means to make himself master of it, by intelligence held with Peter and Bartholomew Libertat, two brothers, who were also burgesses of the same town. They slew Casault, beat the troops of the Spanish party, and let in through the Porte-reale, the duke of Guise, who performed this enterprise with a great deal of conduct. See de Thou, b. cxvi. d'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. iv. chap. 12. Henry IV. upon receiving the news of the reduction of Marseilles, said, "It is now that I am king." In the following campaign, the duke of Guise shewed a great deal of valour, in pursuing the Spaniards as far as Gray; and killed with his own hand, a trooper belonging to the enemy, who had challenged him. Henry IV. embracing him, spoke these words, "Those who "find old examples of virtue before them, must imitate and renew "them, for such as come after." P. Matthieu, tom II. liv. i. p. 192. [Marseilles was not reduced till the beginning of 1596. See note at the end of this book.]

† See on each of these actions, L'Hist. de la Vie du duc d'Epernon,

Boulogne, Montauron, Antibes, and even at Villemur, if it be required. I am sorry that the subject I treat on necessarily engages me in a discussion which may lessen the advantageous opinions that have been conceived of him; but since this is a place where nothing should be concealed or disguised, what can, what ought to be thought of his conduct in Provence? Certainly, to ascribe it all to a bigotry in his religion, is shewing the utmost favour to his reputation. His panegyrists, who so loudly extol his most inconsiderable actions, ought to be a little more moderate when they reflect on his frequent revolts, and acts of disobedience; or begin by establishing it for a truth, that a subject may be irreproachable, yet fail in his duty to his king, and his country, introduce discord and confusion to gratify his ambition, and give to violence the name of right. If any panegyrics are to be bestowed here, doubtless it is the king who merits them, who, after all these offences, received Epernon with open arms, and never excluded him from favours; which in every respect, considering his behaviour, were indeed mere favours to him.

After the death of d'O, there appeared among the candidates a man, who, it was immediately thought, would have the post of superintendant: this was Nicolas de Sancy,* who wanted neither capacity, nor experience, for that station. Sancy might be very properly called a man of wit, using this term in

---

printed at Paris, Ann. 1656. Villebois is a town of Angoumois, which at this day is called La Valette, You may likwise consult the same history, as to the reproaches which our Memoirs give this duke: but he cannot be justified in every particular; and even his own historian looks upon it as impossible. All that can be said is, that M. de Sully took pleasure to aggravate errors, which the last years of the duke's life have almost entirely effaced.

* Nicolas de Harlay de Sancy.

the sense that is generally given it, to denote vivacity, subtilty, and quickness of apprehension. But, as it is very seldom found, that an excellent judgment is joined to these qualities; Sancy spoiled them all by a degree of vanity, caprice, and impetuosity, which sometimes rendered him insupportable. It is my opinion of these strong and lively imaginations in general, that although they are commonly subject to two great faults, which are too much subtilty, and too little clearness in their ideas, and confusion and unsteadiness in their schemes, yet they ought not to be thought wholly incapable of business; because it often happens, that they hit upon expedients which would have escaped more cautious and phlegmatic minds: but there is almost always occasion to watch over them, and to correct their errors.

Sancy had long and usefully served Henry the Third, and the reigning king, both in Germany and Switzerland. He had insinuated himself into Henry's favour by great complaisance, a subtle behaviour, a refined art in heightening his pleasures, and by becoming necessary in his affairs of gallantry. Hence it was that he lived with this prince upon terms of the greatest familiarity. That he might neglect nothing by which he thought he should make his court successfully, he inveighed, without ceasing, against the dissipation of the finances; and, as a flatterer generally goes beyond his mark, in railing at the superintendant he could not help decrying likewise the superintendancy, as an employment ruinous to the state, by which he gave good reason to call his judgment in question. But he himself opposed his advancement to this post by an obstacle still greater: he not only neglected to please madam de Liancourt,[*] then mistress to the king, but also by an intemperance of tongue, to which persons like him are very subject, he had offended this lady on a very delicate occasion.

I know not whether the story I am going to relate was ever in reality more than a mere story; if not, Sancy was the more blameable for spreading it; however be this as it may, thus it ran in Paris: his majesty having sent Alibour, his first physician, to visit madam de Liancourt, who was indisposed (this was in the beginning of his addresses to that lady), at his return he told the king, that she was indeed a little disordered, but that he need not be uneasy, for the consequence would be very good. "But will you not bleed and purge her?" said the king to him. "I shall be very careful how I do that," replied the old man, with the same simplicity, "before she has gone half her time." "How!" interrupted the king, astonished and agitated to the last degree, "what is it you say, friend? Surely you are dreaming, and are not in your right senses!" Alibour supported his assertion with good proofs, which the king thought he should destroy, by telling him upon what terms he was with the lady. "I know not what you have done, or what you have not done," replied the old physician with great composure; and for a complete proof referred him to six or seven months from that time· The king quitted Alibour in great rage, and went immediately to reproach the sick fair one, who, no doubt, knew well enough how to new dress all the good man had ignorantly said;

---

[*] This was the fair Gabrielle, who was wife to Nicholas d'Amerval, lord of Liancourt. She was forced by her father, they say, to this marriage, which was not at all to her liking: but Henry IV. knew very well how to hinder its consummation.

for it was not perceived that any misunderstanding arose between the king and his mistress. It is certain, however, that the event was exactly conformable to Alibour's prediction: but it was thought that Henry, after a more strict examination, was brought to believe that he had been mistaken in his reckoning, since, instead of disowning the child which madam de Liancourt lay in of at Coucy, during the siege of Laon, he acknowledged it openly, and had it baptised by the name of Cæsar.

Sancy gave free scope to his wit in relating this story; and did not forget the circumstance of la Regnardiere,* who, having one day, as he said, taken the liberty to inform his majesty of some things that did not please him, was soon after banished the court, under pretence of his having quarrelled with the admiral.† Sancy found something to say even upon the death of the good man Alibour, and would have thought it more natural, if it had not happened before the accomplishment of his prediction. If he commented thus upon the birth of the son, he did no less upon the whole conduct of the mother. Sancy experienced, to his cost, what the malice of a woman, especially a king's mistress, is capable of doing: Henry loved him, and wished to raise him; and although he was inclined to suppress the post of superintendant of the finances, yet he would have preserved it, merely to have bestowed it upon him; but madam de Liancourt well knew how to prevent it.

---

* "La Regnardiere was a kind of buffoon, half soldier, half "lawyer, and half gentleman, who said whatever came uppermost." It is in this manner he is spoken of in the adventures of the baron de Fœneste, liv. iv. ch. 7. where we find many more stories related of him.

† The Journal de l'Etoile, and the Confession de Sancy, confirm all this pleasantry, as also the suspicion of its ending tragically for old M. Alibour, the king's first physician, who was poisoned, they say, by order of the king's mistress: but all this is alleged without any proof. You may also read, on this head, what Sauval has said, on the faith of public report, and satirical libels, touching the intrigues between the fair Gabrielle and the duke de Bellegarde.

II. INSTEAD of a superintendant of the finances, his majesty composed a council consisting of eight persons; these were, the chancellor de Chiverny, the duke de Retz, messieurs de Belliévre (who was succeeded by Matignon), de Schomberg, de Maisse, de Fresne (a protégé of madam de Liancourt), de La-Grange-le-roi, and de Sancy, who thought himself very happy to be one of the members* of this body. The king judged it necessary to give this council, for form's sake only, and without any distinction, an honorary head, which was the duke of Nevers. This form of government of the finances lasted some time, although with a few inconsiderable alterations, which I shall mention in their place; for the reader may expect in these Memoirs to see whatever relates to the finances treated with all that clearness and extent which a man, who has so long made them his study and employment, is capable of giving them.

The king was convinced in the sequel, that this new change in the council† was far from affording that remedy the disease required: small as my experience was in these affairs, I easily comprehended it. It is not the government of one man only by which the finances are thrown into confusion, since it is an incontestable truth, that, as they must pass through some hands, the fewer that are employed, the less will be embezzled. The abuse lies in the choice of this man, and in the nature of the finances: and therefore, to have this office discharged by many different persons, is to perpetuate the evil. If it be difficult to find in the whole kingdom, one man fit for such an employment, how can it be expected that a great number will be met with? Nor is the mistake less palpable in imagining that all these persons, by each bringing one distinguishing good quality into their employments, the same effect will be produced as by one man who unites them all in himself; since this is to suppose, that this single good quality cannot possibly be rendered useless by the opposition of several bad ones, either in the person himself or in his associates. In general, the predominant principle of all those who enter on public employments, is to raise and enrich themselves and their relations. If this eager desire of riches be not felt by them at first, it is inspired, increased, and stimulated, by the great sums of money which pass through their hands: amidst that dependance on, and mutual fear of, each other, every one represents to himself integrity as a quality not only useless, but hurtful to him, the honour of which is shared by his colleagues, while the inconvenience is wholly his own. The king was far from being fortunate in his choice of the members of this new body: several of those who composed it, besides being of a malignant disposition, were in a situation that exposed them to corruption: they had debts to pay, and domestic wants to supply. His majesty

---

* M. de Thou and Perefixe say, that M. de Sancy was for some time superintendant before M. de Rosny: which ought not to be understood, in my opinion, but only of the authority which he assumed of himself among his fellow-counsellors, as M. de Sully tells us afterwards. The writers of that time agree, that nothing of certainty can be said as to the state of the council of the finances, till the time in which M. de Rosny was at last declared the chief. We run no risque in believing all he says with regard to the finances.

† Perefixe speaks of this new form of the council of the finances, as M. de Rosny does, Ann. 1598. p. 224.

270147

had also destined me a place in it, and had, for a long time, in his conversations with me, expressed his desire that I would make myself thoroughly acquainted with whatever regarded the finances; but I could not possibly submit to the imperious behaviour of the duke of Nevers, who, from his rank of prince, was continually assuming to himself great consequence, in a place where that rank signified very little. One day, when his insolence had exhausted all my patience, I took the liberty to intreat he would remember, that the family of Bethune was in possession of the earldom of Nevers before the family of Gonzague. A man swollen with the pride of ancestry could not possibly receive a more severe mortification. He often repeated to those who would hear him, that my whole family were Huguenots; and, to answer my anecdote with another, said, that he had seen my grandfather make a very mean figure at Nevers. I suffered him to have his revenge, which could extend no farther than keeping me out of a council where I had very little inclination to be with him; and he had this satisfaction. The king, who had many measures to keep, told me, in a very obliging manner, that he was under a necessity of deferring some time longer the proof he intended to give me of his friendship; and I waited for it without murmuring, satisfied with the post of secretary of state, with a salary of two thousand livres a year, and a pension of three thousand six hundred more, which the king bestowed upon me.

Persons of the least discernment being convinced of the necessity of introducing a reformation of the finances, the new council were at first desirous of this honour, and a scheme for that purpose was proposed by those amongst them who most valued themselves for their penetration and method; these were Fresne and la Grange-le-roi; but after they had produced a very large volume upon this subject, it happened with it, as with the most part of systems which have been or may be invented; nothing more easy in speculation, in practice nothing more difficult: and the king, whom they had flattered with mighty hopes, found every thing in the same condition as before, at the end of the year which he had passed at Paris, expecting daily the effect of their promises.

He was retained there to more purpose by the treaty with Lorrain, which, at last, entirely forsaking Spain, concluded a league offensive and defensive with France. Sancy's services were of great use in this treaty, and he obtained almost all the honour of it. The king was no longer at a loss for employment, after the duke of Bouillon arrived at Paris; he came in person to press the execution of those schemes he had entertained me with at Sedan, particularly a declaration of war against Spain, which he made the basis of his advancement in the Low Countries. He used such plausible arguments for it, that, after having partly gained the king, and brought the greater part of the courtiers over to his opinions, he did not scruple to propose it in full council.* There were two different parties who did not approve of this war: those who still retained some attachment to Spain and the league (and they were not few in number), and those who thought a war, in the present weak and exhausted state of the kingdom, was very unseasonable. The party of these last was weak, but their arguments were very strong, if any one would have listened to them.

---

* M. de Thou makes no doubt but the duke de Bouillon was the principal author of this war: and his historian entirely agrees, that in giving this advice he far less consulted the advantage of the state, and the glory of the king, than his own personal interest, and that of the Calvinist party, who necessarily wished for a war, in order to obtain the favourable terms which were granted them by the edict of Nantz. Notwithstanding the reasons for declaring war against Spain, of which a minute detail may be seen in MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, vol. marked 8955, and in the king's declaration, given in

I would not incur the reproach of silence upon this occasion: I used every argument my reason could suggest, to dissuade the king from this war; but this prince, whom a natural propensity drew always a little to that side, thought he had now found the opportunity he sought for, to revenge himself upon a neighbour who had made it his endeavour to cherish the flame which consumed the heart of his kingdom. He was sure of troops from Lorrain: England and Holland, by their ambassadors, gave hopes of a powerful diversion; and, according to the duke of Bouillon, a single word from him was sufficient to make all Luxembourg surrender: Sancy made great promises on the part of the Thirteen Cantons, who were to occupy and ravage the whole of Franch-Compté. The king was determined by all these flattering appearances; and war was formally declared against Spain in January of the following year.

Spain seemed to give herself very little trouble about this proceeding, and answered only by shewing great contempt for Henry's council, and for Henry himself, to whom she gave no other title than that of prince of Bearn. A few days previous to

---

the sixth volume of the Mémoires de la Ligue: all good writers and judicious persons are unanimously of one voice, in favour of the duke de Sully's opinion as to the precipitation and imprudence with which Henry IV. conducted himself in this affair, the consequences of which might have been a good deal more fatal than they were.

this declaration, on the 26th of December, the king, whilst he gave audience to messieurs Montigny* and Ragny,† in his apartments in the Louvre,‡ received a wound in the mouth, by the stroke of a knife, as he stooped forward to embrace one of these gentlemen:§ as soon as this was known there was a violent commotion in the room (which was very full of people), as it was not known at first who had given the blow. When I saw his majesty covered with blood, I was greatly terrified, supposing that the wound was mortal; but he removed all our apprehensions, by saying it was nothing: his lip only was slightly hurt, and a part of one of his teeth broken by the point of the knife, which was found lying on the floor; the wretched parricide was presently seized among the crowd, and proved to be a youth named John Chatel, a pupil of the Jesuits. When the king was informed of this, he said nothing farther against that body, than that he had heard from the mouths of many persons, that the society never loved him, and he was now convinced of it by his own.* Chatel was delivered up to justice;† and the prosecutions against the Je-

---

* Francis de la Grange de Montigny.

† Francis de la Magdelaine de Ragny.

‡ According to others, in the chamber of the marchioness de Monçeaux, at the hotel de Schomberg, behind the Louvre: but, in fact, it was neither at the Louvre, nor at the hotel de Schomberg, that this affair happened. A register belonging to the town-house at Paris, quoted by Piganiole, tom. II. de la Description de Paris, says, that the fair Gabrielle resided, in 1595, at the hotel d'Estrées; and that it was at this place Henry IV. was wounded. This hotel was afterwards called l'hotel du Bouchage; and was purchased in 1616, by M. de Burelle, in order to lodge and accommodate the fathers of the oratory, who still continue there. [Sir Thomas Edmondes, the English ambassador in France, at this time, says, in a letter which he wrote on the same day, to the lord treasurer, that the king was wounded "in madam de Liancourt's lodgings, stooping to salute M. de Montigny, governor of Blois, by a scholar of "the Jesuits, of nineteen years of age, who confessed that he had "signified to his father, long before, that he designed it, in order "*to deliver his sect of Jesuits of so great an enemy:*" and he adds, that "by the circumstances it appeared he was thereunto suborned "by them." See Birch's Negociations, p. 17. EDIT.]

§ "The king, who found himself wounded, looking immediately "round him, and seeing Mathurine, his fool, said, *The deuce take the "fool: she has wounded me.* But she, denying it, ran directly to "shut the door, whereby she was the occasion of preventing this "assassin from making his escape; who, upon being seized and "afterwards searched, dropped his knife, which was covered with "blood.'' Thus l'Etoile speaks of it. The MSS. de la Bibl. du Roi say quite otherwise in vol. 9033, namely, "that the king, "finding himself wounded, spoke thus to one of those two gentlemen, *Ah, cousin! you have wounded me:* and that he thereupon, "throwing himself at his majesty's feet, replied, "God forbid, "sire, that I should entertain even a thought of hurting or wounding your majesty: I have no weapon about me but the sword by

---

" my side." M. de Thou says, that the count of Soissons, seizing " the assassin, said aloud, that it was one of them two who had " given the blow; and that the poniard was perceived to lie at his " feet, glittering by the light of the candles. Lib. iii.

* Sir Thomas Edmondes, in the letter above quoted, says, that " the king, upon receiving the blow, uttered divers times, and par" ticularly to the marshal de Retz, when he came in (to whom it " was well addressed) that he did owe that obligation to those that " had been maintainers and intercessors for the Jesuits against the " proceedings of the honest party." Edit.

† " After having been put to the ordinary and extraordinary trial " upon the rack, which he endured without making any confession, " and having made the *amende honorable*, his hand was cut off, hold" ing in it the murderous knife with which he intended to kill the " king; his flesh was then torn off with red-hot pincers, and he was " drawn between four horses in the Place de Gréve, his body and " members cast into the fire, and burnt to ashes, and the ashes " thrown into the air. The sieur Chatel, the father of the parri" cide, was banished France for nine years, and for ever from the " precincts and jurisdiction of Paris, condemned to pay a fine of " four thousand crowns, his house razed, and instead thereof a

suits, which had been suspended, were now resumed more vigorously than before, and terminated by the banishment of the whole order from the kingdom.* Father John Guignard † was hanged for his pernicious doctrines against the authority and life of kings: John Gueret,‡ Peter Varade, Alexander Mayus, Francis Jacob, and John le Bel, other members of the society, suspected of being his accomplices, were obliged to make the *amende honorable*, and condemned to perpetual banishment.

" pyramid erected, containing the whole story of the fact." L'Etoile, ibid. It is thought that the little square that lies before the Barnabites is the spot on which Chatel's house stood.

[" This assassin, John Chastel," says Mr. Birch, quoting Davila, lib. xiv. " is an astonishing instance of the dreadful excesses of which " popish bigotry and enthusiasm, under the direction of a false and " jesuitical casuistry, are capable. Upon his examination by the " parliament of Paris, he confessed he had often heard it discoursed " and disputed in the schools of the Jesuits, in which he had been " educated, that it was not only lawful, but even meritorious, to kill " Henry Bourbon, a relapsed heretic, and persecutor of the holy " church, who falsely assumed to himself the title of king of France," &c. &c. See Negociations, p. 17. Edit.]

* " The Jesuits, in obedience to the arret against them, quitted " Paris, conducted by a serjeant of the court: they were thirty- " seven in number, part of whom were put into three carts, and the " rest travelled on foot; their procurator being mounted on a little " nag," &c. L'Etoile, ibid.

† He would not make the *amende honorable* to the king, alleging that he had not offended him. Cayet, ibid.

‡ Here the author is mistaken. John Gueret was, by an express arret, condemned to perpetual banishment; but there is no express mention made of Peter Varade, Alexander Mayus, &c. who were comprised with all the rest, and without being particularly named in the arret, which proscribed in general the whole society. It is a glaring calumny in Maurisot, to have advanced, chap. 33, that Francis Jacob, to whom they had told that Henry IV. was assassinated by Chatel, boasted that he would have dispatched this prince, if he had not been prevented by Chatel. I know of no historian who has said any such thing.

IV. As soon as the treaty between France and Lorrain was concluded, the latter immediately, and without solicitation, dispersed her troops over Burgundy, under the conduct of Tremblecourt* and Saint George, and carried terror into every part of that province. On the other side, the garrison of Soissons, a place absolutely devoted to the league, commanded by Conan and Bellefond,† was almost wholly cut off by Moussy,‡ d'Edouville, de Bays, and Gadancourt the lieutenant of my company. The duke of Montmorency,§ to prove himself worthy of the dignity of constable, which he had lately been invested with, fell upon Dauphiny, the Lionnois, and Bresse, with a body of four thousand foot, and four hundred well-disciplined horse; drove out from those places the remainder of the troops belonging to the dukes of Savoy and Nemours, took Vienne by composition from Dizimieux, who was governor of it for the duke of Nemours, and afterwards Montluel. Marshal Biron, after the expedition at Beaune, made himself master of Nuys, Autun, and Dijon.‖ The duke of Bouillon, as soon as war was proclaimed, entered Luxembourg, where, with the assistance of count Philip of Nassau, he defeated eight or ten parties of horse, under the command of Mansfield.

---

* — d'Aussonville, sieur de St. George, and Lewis de Beauvau, sieur de Tremblecourt, both gentlemen of Lorrain.

† Bernardine Gigault de Bellefonde.

‡ On the 25th of February, in the plains de Villers Coterets in Vallois. The baron de Conan is called Conas or Conac, in M. de Thou: and instead of Bays, we must read Beyne.

§ Henry, the second son of the constable Anne de Montmorency, who was made constable in the year 1593.

‖ See all these different expeditions into Burgundy, in de Thou and d'Aubigné, Ann. 1595.

Henry drew a favourable augury of his future success from the advantages he gained in the first acts of hostility, and did not doubt but that, by uniting all these separate bodies into one army, he should make whatever province he conducted it into tremble. It is certain that if he did this, he could not make a stand every where as before; but the expectations his majesty formed from his first project, made him resolve to prefer it. Having the choice of entering Picardy, Champaigne, or Burgundy, he determined upon the latter, where messieurs de Montmorency, Biron, and Sancy, gave him hopes of great success. Their secret motives for calling him thither were these:

The constable Montmorency had been alarmed by the great preparations he saw made by Spain in Lombardy, where the constable of Castille had orders to quit the Milanese, however necessary his presence might be in that country, to enter France, and make some bold attempt there, after he should be joined by the count de Fuentes, general of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands. Montmorency therefore apprehended that all these troops would fall upon him. Marshal Biron, who was in the same quarters, where, after seizing the city of Dijon, he had attacked its castle, and that of Talan, both of great strength, was afraid, likewise, that he should be obliged to raise the siege if he was not assisted.

As to Sancy, his views were to advance his own reputation by the conquest of Franche-Comté, to which he was incessantly endeavouring to persuade the king. Convinced by his own experience of madam de Liancourt's power, he sought to make her approve this project: but the terms he was upon with this lady not permitting him to propose it to her himself, he concealed his own interest in the affair, and made use of the interposition of others. He caused it to be hinted to the chancellor de Chiverny, and, by his means, to a lady who could not fail of making her court by it to madam de Liancourt, that the king might easily provide a noble inheritance for her son Cæsar, by driving the Spaniards out of Franche-Comté, and giving him the possession of it under the sovereignty of the Thirteen Cantons, who would be induced by their own interest to favour the attempt.

Madam de Liancourt, I am persuaded, could not flatter herself with the hope of gaining the king's consent to so ridiculous a scheme; and durst not even communicate it to him, though this prince's passion* for her was so great, that he suffered no one to be ignorant of it: but there needed no more to make him resolve upon a journey to Burgundy, than this lady's joining herself to those who advised him to it. Such is a court, and thus are kings imposed upon: let them learn from hence, that, whatever ideas they may have conceived of the wisdom and abilities of their ministers, to judge truly of every transaction it is the surest way to study carefully the secret inclinations, interest, and dispositions of those who are nearest to their persons.

To remedy, in some measure, the inconveniencies which might arise from leaving the frontiers of Picardy exposed to the inroads of the Spanish troops which were in Flanders, the king, who was not, like others, imposed upon by the great promises England and Holland made him, left messieurs de Nevers, de Bouillon, de Villars, and de Saint Paul,* upon this frontier, each with a detachment under his command; enjoining them to assist each other upon occasion, and, above all, recommending a good understanding amongst themselves. In case of a reunion, the duke of Nevers was appointed to command in chief. Henry provided with the same wisdom and foresight for the affairs at home, by establishing a council, which, besides the finances, was to take cognizance of all the treaties that were made with the provinces, cities, and governors; of all affairs relating to war; and of the administration of justice throughout the kingdom.

---

* "He went through Paris, having this lady by his side; he took "her with him to hunt, and caressed her before every body." Journ. de l'Etoile, ibid. And we may judge of the attachment of Henry IV. to this lady, from the letters he wrote to her: which see in the collection newly printed.

As soon as his majesty had publicly explained himself with regard to the forming this council, the count of Soissons wished to be made president of it; and began to hint something to that purpose in the king's presence. That I might remove his resentment against me for traversing his marriage, I solicited this title for him, which was more honourable than effective, and in all appearance would be of short duration: but the king, whose aversion for the count increased daily, had already fixed upon the prince of Conti, and declared his intention at dinner, before the whole court; then turning to the count of Soissons, he told him, that, knowing his disposition to be turned wholly towards war, he would keep him about his person this campaign, and ordered him to get his company of gendarmes in readiness to attend him. The prince of Conti answered only by a profound bow, because he expressed himself with difficulty; and the count of Soissons did the same, because anger prevented him from speaking, all his majesty said to him being accompanied with praises of his valour, and and an air of distinction which forced him to appear satisfied.

---

* **Fra cis d'Orleans, count de St. Paul, governor of Provence.**

The members of the new council were almost all the same that had composed the former; to which were added three intendants, Heudicourt, Marcel, and Guibert: the number was afterwards augmented to eight, by joining to those three Incarville, Des-Barreaux, Atichy, Santeny, and Vienne, and a secretary named Meillant. Although the duke of Nevers was not now in the council, the king found no less difficulty in procuring me a place in this than in the former. He was afraid to propose it at first, on account of the Catholics, who could not suffer a Protestant in power: but he broke through this obstacle three days afterwards; and the reason he gave for it to the other counsellors was, that the confidence which the prince of Conti had in me, rendered my association necessary even to themselves.

The road his majesty was to take being through Moret, I attended him so far, not so much to receive him there, since madam de Rosny could have done that without me, as to have an opportunity of conferring privately with him, and to receive his last instructions concerning affairs that might in his absence be brought before the council, the members whereof did not long continue in a state of friendship. My colleagues, perceiving by the private dispatches I received from the king, that I was in possession of his confidence, entered, through jealousy, into a combination against me, looking upon me as one who would carry away all the honour of every meritorious act that was performed by the council. They sought to disgust me, or to force me to silence, by uniting in a constant opposition to all I said; but, finding that, notwithstanding this behaviour I still persisted to take my own measures, they had recourse to another stratagem, and in our assemblies every affair was discussed but what related to the finances, which was referred to private meetings, either at the chancellor's or at Sancy's; and there all was regulated without my participation. I did not dissemble my thoughts of this collusion, but declared to them, that I had no desire to mix in their debates; and, instead of signing their decrees, protested against them, and retired to Moret. The members of the council, who could not even invent any pretence for the disgust they gave me, being afraid of his majesty's reproaches, prevailed upon the prince of Conti himself to intreat me to return. Being always naturally incapable of flattery, or of disguising my sentiments, I replied, that since they did not rectify the abuses which had been introduced into the finances, although they were sufficiently acquainted with them, I would at least avoid the reproach of following their conduct, and would stay at Moret, rather than be a witness of errors which I saw committed with impunity.

The king, whom I informed of what had happened to me, found so much similarity between his situation and mine, that he thought he could not console me more effectually, than by complaining to me in his turn. He had indeed most ungovernable spirits to deal with. The count of Soissons, who had followed him with reluctance, revenged himself by repeated instances of his caprice and ill humour. But all his endeavours could not induce the king, however greatly he was offended, to order him to retire, which was the point he wished to bring him to: and he was at last obliged to go of his own accord, upon a pretence so very trifling, that it had scarcely the appearance of one. A report being spread that the constable of Castille was approaching, the king ordered the constable de Montmorency and marshal Biron to bring up the two bodies of troops which they commanded: the count of Soissons alleged that, by his post of high steward of the king's household, he had a right to the chief command of these troops in his majesty's absence, and asserted his claim to it in his presence. The king did not think proper even to request a favour of this nature from the constable and the marshal, and used his utmost endeavours to banish so ridiculous a notion from the count's mind. He solicited, he intreated him, as he would have done his son or brother (these were his majesty's own words), but in vain: the count, who did not err through ignorance, quitted him with a dissembled discontent, and prevailed upon part of the soldiers under his command to do the like. The king immediately dispatched letters to his council, to take proper measures upon the count's flight: the same messenger also left one for me as he passed by Moret. Henry did not yet know that I had retired thither; but we had agreed upon this expedient, to conceal from my enemies the correspondence I had with his majesty.

Three or four days after the receipt of this letter, my servants informed me that some soldiers were just arrived, who insisted upon quartering at Saint-Mamert, a village upon the confluence of the Seine and the Loin, dependant upon Moret, and distant from it about a quarter of a league. I sent Camord to bring me intelligence who they were, and what was their design. They not only neglected to send me, by this gentleman, the usual compliments upon such occasions, but likewise answered him insolently, that they had a right to quarter in any place where their horses began to be fatigued, and all that could be required of them was to do no mischief. They refused to name their captains, and only said that they belonged to the count of Soissons. That I might leave these officers no excuse for their rudeness, I wrote to them a second time, telling them that, since they belonged to the count of Soissons, who honoured me with his friendship, they were welcome to quarter at Moret; that I would provide them lodgings in the inns and houses of the town's people, where they would have greater conveniency, and just hinted to them that I was sensible of the manner in which they had received my deputy. Camord, whom I would have sent with this second message, told me, that it would have no other effect than to increase the insolence of the officers, who came with a premeditated design to affront me, which he confirmed by several other circumstances of his reception, which he had hitherto concealed from me, to avoid a greater misfortune. Madam de Rosny, who was present at this relation, began to give way to female fears, and accusing Camord with imprudence, said she had rather that the whole village of Saint-Mamert were laid in ruins, than see me, for so slight an occasion, at variance with the count, and exposed to a contest with his officers.

I obliged my wife to be silent; and after arresting five or six of the troopers, who came to get their equipages mended at Moret, and to purchase provisions, I again sent Camord to these insolent officers. They received him still worse than before, and hardly forbore laying hands on him; mingling great threats with their complaints for the detention of their soldiers. It was no longer possible to dissemble; and all that now remained to be done, was to assert my authority, yet with all imaginable moderation. I ordered twelve other troopers, who had just entered Moret, to be arrested; and in two hours time assembled an hundred and fifty arquebusiers, thirty horse, and thirty foot soldiers, with whom I set out for Saint-Mamert, by the road that leads to it by land, and which has a thick shade of trees on each side, while the rest of my troop pursued the same rout upon the river, in a flat boat covered with planks, and arrived at the same time with me under the houses of the village situated near the river. The count of Soissons' party, seeing this double escort, detached some of their men to ask me what I meant by it? "Nothing," replied I calmly; "but this village belonging to "me, I come to quarter my soldiers here." The officers by these words understood that I was not disposed to yield to them, and sent again to make excuses for what had happened, telling me that they had no design to quarter in any place that belonged to me, without my permission, as the count of Soissons would never pardon them for it. In effect, they paid for what provisions they had bought, and remounted their horses, without even demanding the prisoners, whom I sent after them as soon as they had reached Dormeilles. They thanked me, and offered me their service, which entirely removed my anger. I sent the officers a dozen bottles of wine and two pies, after which I mounted my horse, to go, in obedience to his majesty's order, to consult with the prince of Conti upon the measures necessary to be taken with regard to the count of Soissons' desertion.

V. This misfortune was very inconsiderable, compared to that which happened in Picardy. The jealousy of command created a misunderstanding between the duke of Nevers and the duke of Bouillon. The counts of Fuentes and Rosne, who commanded the Spanish troops, and were doubtless informed of it, took advantage of their division, and laid siege to Catelet and Capelle. The first of these two places was in want of provisions and ammunition; and the second had a dishonourable governor: but the loss of them was chiefly occasioned by the two French generals,* who, through hatred of each other, neglected to give them any assistance,

Things were in this state, when the governor of Ham, a place belonging to the Spaniards, being discontented with his garrison, resolved to deliver up the castle to the king, which would necessarily include the surrender of the city. He addressed himself to the duke of Longueville, and intreated him to send him a powerful assistance, having a very numerous garrison to oppose. The duke of Longueville acquainted his general officers, and the duke of Bouillon in particular, with the affair, who promised him a speedy supply. Upon this assurance the duke of Longueville, that he might not by delay lose so favourable an opportunity, hastened immediately to Ham with d'Humieres,† followed by some Picardine troops, and threw part of them into the castle, and part into the adjacent places, endeavouring to reduce the city by scaling and petarding. The enemy's garrison defended themselves like lions, and repulsed them several times; and probably a fiercer action of this kind never happened. At length, the French animated by the bravery of their leaders, who found that it was in vain to expect any assistance from the duke of Bouillon, attacked the intrenchments of the castle, carried them, and entered the city. The Spanish garrison received them there with great intrepidity: being forced to give ground, they rallied again several times, and many little actions were fought in the squares, cross-ways, and even in the houses, till the enemy, to the number of a thousand, or twelve hundred men, were all cut in pieces. But the French bought this advantage very dear; they lost thirty of their best officers, among whom were du Cluseau * and la Croix, and d'Humieres † himself, the best and bravest officer in all Picardy.

---

* Brantome justifies the duke de Nevers concerning the defeat the French met with at Dourlens; and observes that he advanced by forced marches, and that he ordered them to wait for him, but the other commanders did not think proper to do so. Tom. III. p. 268.

† Charles, lord of Humieres.

Messieurs de Saint-Paul, de Bouillon, and Villars, having in the mean time united their forces, thought they could not better employ them, than by relieving Dourlens, to which Fuentes and Rosne had laid siege, after taking Catelet and Capelle. The duke of Bouillon brought four hundred horse, Villars as many, and Saint-Paul five hundred; and their infantry consisted, in all, of two thousand men, which they determined to throw into the city, if they failed of driving the besiegers from before it.

About half a league from Dourlens, Bouillon, having sent fifty of his troop five hundred paces before him, to gain the summit of a mountain, from whence they might have a full view of the city and the camp of the besiegers, four of their horsemen, who preceded the others, perceived a body of the enemy coming directly towards them, between the

---

* N. Blanchard du Cluseau.

† Nothing can be added to the eulogium which M. de Thou gives this gentleman, he says, book cxii. that the king and the whole kingdom lamented him: his life and illustrious actions fill the 8930th volume of the MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi.

camp and the hill. This was, in fact, their whole army, in order of battle, which had got intelligence of our design. But these four troopers, being hindered by their fear from making a perfect discovery, made a false report to the duke of Bouillon, who supposing it to be only a detachment, hastened his march with his squadron. Arriving at the top of the hill, he plainly saw his mistake: one party of one hundred horse preceded two squadrons of six hundred each, which followed at the distance of about a thousand paces, and were supported by three other squadrons, consisting of an equal number, and a body of seven or eight thousand foot. The hundred horse perceiving Bouillon, galloped towards him, followed at a quick pace by the two first squadrons, all armed cap-a-pie, with lances by their sides, which left him no room to doubt but that the French were discovered, and that they would be obliged to engage, notwithstanding the inequality of their numbers, the Spaniards being stronger by two-thirds than they, unless he could conceal from them his little party. Bouillon, sending a gentleman to the admiral, to desire he would come immediately to his assistance, as soon as Villars received this message, he lifted up his hands and exclaimed, "Now "my companions, here is the opportunity we have "so ardently wished for to show our affection and "loyalty to our king and to France, and our valour "to our enemies, follow me, therefore, and resolve "to do as I do!" then ordering his men to arm, he set off, and soon reached the right of Bouillon's troop, who on seeing Villars so well prepared, told him, that to prevent the enemy from discovering their rear, it was necessary to charge them with as much fury as possible. The admiral did not stay to be desired a second time; but, supposing that

that he should be vigorously assisted by Bouillon, advanced, through emulation, before his troop, and galloping intrepidly towards the enemy, suddenly attacked the left wing, threw himself, with his pistol in his hand, amidst the forest of lances of the first six hundred horse, and would have probably broken through them, and perhaps have gained still greater advantages, if he had been seconded with equal bravery: but Bouillon, on his side, made only a false attack, after which he wheeled about and retreated, and has since constantly maintained, that it was this only which had been agreed upon between the * admiral and him, although all those who accompanied the latter have unanimously asserted, that he meant a real attack.

This mistake, if it was one, had a consequence as fatal as could have been expected; the enemy's squadron which Bouillon had attacked and afterwards shunned, was the first to fall upon Villars, who was then conqueror of his own: and being that instant joined by fresh troops, which came pouring on him in great numbers, his squadron, being quite overwhelmed, could find their safety only in flight. Villars, incapable of fear, and disdaining to turn

---

* If we will not give credit to his biographer, let us believe M. de Thou, who entirely clears the duke de Bouillon: he says moreover, that admiral de Villars was advised by the count de Saint-Paul to retire, but that he did not take this advice for any other than a kind of order of the duke de Bouillon, to which he refused to pay any regard, through a piece of vanity and bravery which cannot be excused from the imputation of temerity, liv. cxii. D'Aubigné speaks in the same manner as de Thou, tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 9. Les Mem. de la Ligne, tom. VI. and Matthieu, tom. II. liv. 1. The opinion of Cayet is, that admiral de Villars would willingly have taken advantage of the advice which the duke of Bouillon caused to be given him to retire, but that he was then too far engaged. Chron. Novenn. liv. vii. p. 504.

his back upon the enemy, performed wonders with a few brave men who would not abandon him; but at last, being attacked on all sides, and surrounded by the enemy, they were all thrown to the ground and expired, pierced with a thousand wounds, or massacred in cold blood.*

Bouillon gained nothing by this sacrifice of his colleague: the victorious enemy attacked his squadron, that commanded by Saint-Paul, and the whole body of infantry. Their leader had not inspired them, by his example, with a resolution to defend themselves. Bouillon and Saint-Paul fled with their cavalry, leaving the infantry without any means of safety: in short, they were all cut off. After this, the besieged city in vain asked permission to capitulate; the enemy, intoxicated with their good fortune, would listen to no propositions, but stormed the place while they were parlying, and inhumanly butchered all they found in it.† I had the whole of this relation from La-Fond, who, after the loss of his master, returned to my service; and the reader may be assured that it is perfectly true, since this man deserves all the credit that is due to a man of honour, and an eye-witness of what he relates. He told me, that more than three thousand French were lost upon this occasion; and, what is truly deplorable, a greater number of valiant men perished, than in the three great battles the king had fought at Coutras, Arques, and Ivry: in Villars alone, France sustained an irreparable loss; to the general grief of the kingdom, I joined mine in particular, for the loss of a sincere and incomparable friend.

---

* Admiral de Villars was among these last; after having been made prisoner by some Neapolitans, a Spanish captain, named Contrera, purposely entered into a dispute with them about having him, and he made a handle of their refusal, to kill him. L'Etoile says, that the hatred which the Spaniards bore him, from the time he quitted the party of the league for that of the king, was the true cause of his death. He gives him the same encomiums as M. de Rosny. Journ. de P. de l'Etoile, Ann. 1595.

† Dourlens was taken about the end of July, 1595. Edit.

Another letter, equally worthy of credit, from the sieur Baltazar, whom I had expressly charged not to omit the smallest circumstance relating to the actions of the king's army, puts it in my power to inform the reader of all that passed. In this recital he will, with great pleasure, behold a king whom the sweets of royalty had not power to change; his successes were such, in all their circumstances, as could be attributed to nothing but his own valour and good conduct, and the glory of them was heightened by the contrast of those misfortunes which happened in all places where he was not in person. Indeed this campaign of Henry in Franche-Comté, in the opinion of the best judges, exceeded all he had hitherto made.

I have before observed, that marshal Biron was employed in assisting the citizens of Dijon, who held the enemy's garrison besieged in their castle. He arrived there very fortunately: the viscount of Tavannes* having brought a considerable reinforcement to this garrison, the besieged became besiegers in their turn. The citizens, pressed on all sides, and reduced to the last extremity, could only defend themselves at the ends of a few streets to which they had retired, and they had but one of the city-gates in their possession, when Biron came to their assistance, and reanimated their courage; they once more drove out the viscount Tavannes, and surrounded the castles of Dijon and Talan.* In the midst of these transactions Biron was informed that the duke of Maïenne, full of grief for the success of the king's arms in Burgundy, had so earnestly solicited the constable of Castille for assistance, that the latter was upon the point of passing the Alps with his army, to enter Burgundy. Biron, concealing this intelligence from the king, contented himself with only sending to intreat he would come as soon as possible to assist him to reduce the castle of Dijon. The king had reached Troyes when he received the marshal's dispatches, and barely guessing at a circumstance which the marshal had an absolute certainty of, namely, that the constable of Castille, who, he supposed, would soon pass into Flanders, would take Dijon in his way, to settle there the affairs of the league with the duke of Maïenne, he marched hastily thither, and put every thing in motion, that they might find nothing more to do on their arrival.

---

* John de Saulx, made a marshal of France by the league, and lieutenant of Burgundy for the duke of Maïenne.

It is not to be doubted but that these two generals might still have been able to prevent the king, and preserve the castles of Dijon, had they not stopped unseasonably in their way to take Vesou, and some other little places in Franche-Comté, which had been seized by the troops of Lorrain. To this voluntary delay necessity afterwards added another at Gray, by the overflowing of the river Saone, which made it impossible for them to pass it. To remove this obstacle, the constable of Castille caused a bridge to be built over the river below the town; but he carried on this work so slowly, that it seemed as if he were afraid of engaging himself in the heart of France, with so many rivers behind him. The truth was, this general already knew that he had the king before him.

---

* About half a league from Dijon, where an Italian named Francisque commanded.

When the king left Troyes he sent the count of Torigny forwards,* with eight or nine hundred horse, with which marshal Biron was extremely pleased. Four days after, Henry himself arrived at Dijon, and, without dismounting, went immediately to reconnoitre the outworks, and all the neighbouring places, especially on that side where the enemy might be expected. He caused deep intrenchments to be made, and by that means cut off all communication between the two castles. This done, the king perceiving that notwithstanding all the efforts he could make, the castles might still hold out a long time, he went, according to his usual custom, with a small detachment, to meet the enemy, that he might retard their march, and give time to the rest of his troops to finish their enterprise. Having so inconsiderable a number with him, he thought if he could find his enemies employed in their passage over the Saone, it would afford him a favourable opportunity: he therefore appointed Lux and Fontaine-Françoise† for a rendezvous for the rest of his troops, and marched before with only three hundred horse, half of whom were arquebusiers, and with this little escort advanced to the Vigenne, near Saint-Seine; from thence he detached the marquis of Mirebeau,‡ whith fifty or sixty horse, to obtain intelligence, and in the mean time passed the Vigenne with a hundred, or a hundred and twenty horse, designing only to reconnoitre the ground, and the face of a country where he might possibly be obliged to come to an action.

---

* Odet de Matignon, count de Torigny, eldest son to the marshal.

† Upon the frontiers of Burgundy and Franche-Comté: this expedition happened in the beginning of June, 1595.

‡ James Cabot, marquis of Mirebeau, and count de Charni, counsellor of state, and lieutenant in Burgundy for the king, died in 1670.

He had not marched more than a league, when he saw Mirebeau return in great disorder, who told him, that he had been charged by three or four hundred horse, which had prevented him from completely reconnoitring the enemy; but he added, that he believed these four hundred horse had been sent to seize the post of Saint-Seine, and that they were closely followed by the whole army. Biron, who arrived that instant, offered to go and obtain more certain intelligence. At the distance of a thousand paces he met, upon a little hill, an advanced guard, consisting of sixty horse, which he attacked, and taking their place, saw plainly the whole Spanish army marching in order of battle, and in particular, a body of four hundred horse, which advancing before the rest of the army, pursued a party of one hundred and fifty French. This was the party commanded by d'Aussonville,* whom his majesty had sent to make discoveries on the other side. D'Aussonville, by flying, turned the arms of the pursuers on Biron. The enemy's detachment dividing into two bands, attacked him on the right and left, doubtless with the same intention as Biron, to discover what forces were in the rear. The difference between them was, that the enemy, being supported by near six hundred horse, were two-thirds superior in number to the two squadrons commanded by Biron and Mirebeau, which made up only three hundred.

---

* ——baron d'Aussonville de Saint George, a gentleman of Lorrain.

Notwithstanding this inequality, Biron continued to make a stand: he separated his three hundred horse into three equal divisions, placing Mirebeau, with the first, on the right, the baron of Lux,* with the second, on the left, and posted himself, with the third, in the centre. The enemy attacked each side at once, with a hundred and fifty men: Lux suffered greatly, and was even thrown to the ground, with many others: Biron, having the advantage by his situation, flew to his assistance, and reanimated his troops; but was himself charged with such impetuosity by all the enemy's squadrons united together, towards whom he saw others from the main body of the army still advancing, that he was obliged to retreat. This retreat, as soon as the enemy's horse drew nearer, was changed into a real flight; in which condition he came within view of the king, who immediately sent a hundred horse to support him. Nothing is more difficult than to stop the flight of a squadron when the enemy is at their heels; the last hundred men caught the panic of the others, and returned flying with those they went to assist.

The king now finding that all depended upon himself, advanced towards the fugitives, without taking time to put on his helmet, exposed himself to the fury of the victorious squadrons, which consisted of more than eight hundred men, called his principal officers by their names, and throwing himself every where, without any regard to his own person, at last obliged some of the fugitives to stop. He formed the whole into two divisions, and putting himself at the head of a hundred and fifty horse, returned to the charge on one side, while La-Tremouille,* with a like number, did the same, by his order, on the other: had it not been for such an exertion of courage, it is probable, that not one of those three hundred men, thus engaged on the farther side of a river, with a victorious body of cavalry in front, would have escaped. The king,† setting his soldiers an example, threw himself, bareheaded, amidst six of the enemy's squadrons, broke through them, and forced them to give ground. Biron taking advantage of this opportunity, rallied about a hundred and twenty horse, and returned to support the king, and all together drove the enemy's horse back to the main body of the duke of Maïenne's army.

---

* Edme de Malain, baron de Lux or de Luz: he was a counsellor of state, captain of fifty gens d'armes, and the king's lieutenant in Burgundy. We shall speak of him when we come to mention marshal Biron's conspiracy, in which he was an accomplice.

---

* Claude de la Trémouille, duke of Thouars.

† The king said, that upon other occasions and emergencies into which he had happened to fall, he fought for victory, but here he contended for his life. Perefixe, Matthieu, Cayet, Le Graine, and d'Aubigné, relate the actions of this day in the same manner; but M. de Thou, and vol. 8929 of the royal MSS. with some little difference. D'Aubigné says, that the king did not shew himself entirely satisfied, that only the dukes de la Tremouille and d'Elbœuf joined together with a good grace, "to brush off," says he, "the dew before his majesty." Tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 8. But according to de Thou, he commended much before the parliament, Mirebeau, La Curée, and many others.

"I have no need of counsel but of assistance," replied Hen. IV. to those who advised him to make his escape on a good Turkish horse that was got ready for him; "there is more hazard in the "flight than the chase." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 187. "Mainville," adds this historian, "who stood near him, and had his pis"tol ready charged for the first of the enemy that came near, "fired at one so *a-propos*, that he shot him quite through the head, "and the ball came whistling so about the king's ears, that he "never spoke of a pistol but he remembered this report, saying, "that it was the loudest he had ever heard, having been charged "with two steel balls." According to the account of the same historian, the duke de Maïenne demanded only four hundred horse of the Spanish general to attack the king's troops, which the Spaniards refused him, being persuaded that Henry only wanted to draw him into an ambuscade. This distrust of the enemy was the occasion of his escape at Fontaine-Françoise, as it had been before at Aumale. And what is more surprising, this prince only lost six men in so hot an action; while on the enemy's side one hundred and twenty were killed, besides two hundred wounded, and sixty taken prisoners. Chron. Novenn. liv. vii. p. 497.

Henry would not have suffered his ardour to transport him so far, but that he did not immediately perceive, that a wood on each side of him was crowded with fusileers, to whose discharge he had like to have been exposed, and would have been surrounded by them, if, in the heat of the fight, he had attacked the Spanish army: he therefore stopped his career, and kept himself upon his guard. At that moment he perceived two other bodies of horse, who came out of one of those woods to strengthen the advanced guard, which he had vanquished. This was one of those critical moments, when the least want of precaution brings on inevitable ruin. The king, who with one glance perceived the design of these troops, ordered his to halt and form in close order, that they might be in a condition to receive them; this was all that was then necessary, for in the heat of his victory he soon overturned all that opposed him, and found himself at large before all those battalions, who were astonished at the miracles they saw him perform. Henry knew this surprise would not last long, and that he would have the fury of a whole army to sustain, animated by the sight of a handful of foes, to repair the shame of such an astonishing defeat; he therefore took advantage of the enemy's inaction, to regain at least his first post, without being pursued, and to disengage himself from the midst of the enemy's army, which he effected with so much order and superiority, that they could make themselves no amends for their loss; and this prince, in one day, and almost in one moment, acquired the honour of the most glorious victory, and finest retreat, that ever any history has afforded an example of.

When the king reached his first position, he found the count de Chiverny,* the chevalier d'Oise, messieurs de Vitry, de Clermont, de Risse, d'Arambure, de La-Curée, d'Heures, de Saint Geran, and de La-Boulaye, each with his company, which being joined to those troops the king before had, composed a body of eight hundred horse: after this reinforcement, the enemy durst not attack them. Being persuaded that Henry's whole army was not far off, and not yet recovered from their consternation at the defeat of their men by a body scarce the sixth part of their number, they turned back, placing the infantry in the rear to cover their cavalry. The king did not fail to pursue them closely, and harassed them continually, till they had repassed the Saone upon the bridge they had built below Gray. Not daring to attempt the passage again, Burgundy, by this exploit, remained wholly at the king's discretion: he reduced it all except Seure,* in a few days, and seized several little towns in Franche-Comté, which he released, at the intreaty of the

---

* Henry Huralt, count de Chiverny—George de Brancas-Villars Louis de l'Hôpital-Vitry—George de Clermont d'Amboise,—de Crequy de Rissey—Jean d'Arambure—and Gilbert Filhet de La-Curée, who also was in the engagement, where he fought without armour, and badly mounted. A voice, which he thought to be the king's, called to him, "Take care, Curée;" when, lo, he found it was one of the enemy, who was just ready to run him through with his lance; but he killed him. Vol. 8929. Mss. de la Bibliot. du Roi.

* Seure, a town upon the river Soane: it has changed its name, and now is called Bellegarde.

Swiss. These advantages were all owing to the action at Fontaine-Françoise.

V. Henry, when he learnt the defeat of his forces in Picardy, confessed, that these advantages, great as they were, did not equal that loss. He quitted Burgundy and the Lyonnois immediately, and marched hastily towards Paris. Passing by Moret, I acquainted him with my motives for leaving the council; he approved of them, and was of opinion, that the confidence which the other members of it perceived he reposed in me, and the desire I had to make myself still more worthy that distinction, had drawn their enmity upon me. He had the goodness to console me for it, by assuring me that my sufferings upon this occasion would only encrease his friendship for me. I agreed with his majesty, that at a time when the check his forces received at Dourlens might occasion a revolution, there was a necessity to dissemble his disgust, and to avoid accusing any one. It was to me only that the king complained of the authors of that fatal accident, and deplored the dangerous effects of enmity between leaders, which is almost the sole cause of the greatest disasters in war. He appeared sensibly affected with the loss of admiral Villars, and never mentioned him but with the highest praises: nor could he be so far deceived by any thing which the interested parties advanced, as to place all that had happened to the account of the deceased.

Henry was now convinced, and acknowledged to me, that he had yielded unseasonably to proposals for a war, the success of which he had been persuaded was infallible: he was even candid enough to treat it as an error which might plunge France once more into greater miseries than those she had just been delivered from. By speaking thus, the king only reflected on the greatness of a loss such as Catelet, Capelle, Ardres,* Dourlens, Cambray, from which Balagny had been just driven, and Calais especially, which, though not yet taken, was looked upon as already lost. As for me, I found that France had risked still more on those occasions where the king, by an astonishing instance of valour and good fortune alone, had preserved Burgundy and his own life. From this time Henry used to say, that a declaration of war was one of those affairs that required the greatest deliberation, and could never be sufficiently attended to. From this example, princes may still draw another lesson no less useful, which is, that they ought never to entertain a personal hatred towards their neighbours, and that prudence, on certain occasions, requires them to seem disposed for a reconciliation, notwithstanding the most violent, and even the most just resentment.

The king was careful to avoid discovering his thoughts in public; on the contrary, he endeavoured to revive the courage of those who seemed most deprest. To the Parisians, who made him compliments of condolance upon his loss, he replied that it might be easily repaired, provided they would join actions to words. They made him great offers; but his majesty, who had had frequent proofs of the little dependance he could have on them, took his own measures, and without waiting for the accomplishment of their promises, left Paris the next day, with the satisfaction of hearing before he departed, by a courier from Rome, that the pope had been at last prevailed upon to grant him the absolution * he had so long solicited. In the present conjuncture, this news was of the utmost importance.

---

* Ardres was surrendered to the enemy by the count de Belin, almost without making any defence; for which he was disgraced, turned out of his places, and sent home to his estate, &c. Bongars Epist. 75 ad Camer. Morisot, ch. 33. [Ardres was not taken till the following year, after the reduction of Calais. See note at the end of this book. Edit.]

To this absolution the holy father annexed the following conditions: † That the king should ex-

---

* "What made the pope," says M. de Perefixe, "delay giving "absolution so long was, he said, because that he alone had the "power of restoring penitents: and he was very much displeased "that the prelates of France had taken upon them to absolve him, "though they had only done it provisionally, *ad cautelam*."

† Besides these conditions, the original of which may be seen in vol. 8778 of the MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, where the act of absolution of Henry IV. is set down at length, in Italian, the holy father imposes therein for penance upon this prince, to hear on every Sunday and festival, a conventual mass in the chapel royal, and private mass every week-day, to say the rosary every Sunday, the chapelet every Saturday, and the litanies every Wednesday, to fast every Friday, to confess and communicate publicly at least four times a year. I observe, in this act, that the pope, after having given this prince absolution, then entitles him only the king of France and Navarre. At each verse of the *Miserere*, the holy father gave a light touch of the penitentiary crook on the shoulders of M. du Perron, and M. d'Ossat, who are therein called *Procuratori di Navarra*: this is but an ordinary formality in this sort of ceremony; upon which the Protestant writers have not failed to comment with great malignity, by saying that Henry IV. had submitted to receive lashes of the whip from the procurator, and other such like calumnies: but these malicious pleasantries have not been able to impose upon any, since M. de Thou and all the sensible writers have shewn, that they were altogether unjust and without foundation. M. de Sully, as far as appears, had got over this popular error; but I know not if he observes the same equity with regard to M. d'Ossat.

What he says here, and in many other places of these Memoirs, excited in me a curiosity to read carefully the collection of this cardinal's letters, who is reputed to have been as good a Frenchman as an able statesman. I will speak my mind freely as to each grievance which furnishes the duke de Sully with occasion of attacking him, clude the Protestants from all employments and dignities, and use his utmost endeavours to suppress them entirely: that he should restore the celebration of mass in Bearn, and oblige the Huguenots to make restitution to the Catholics of all the effects which had been taken from the ecclesiastics: that he should prevail upon the prince of Condé to embrace the Roman Catholic religion: that he should

---

according as they fall in my way. And to begin with that of Henry the Fourth's absolution, it appears to me, after examining all he says on this head, page 45, 48, 105, 107, 115, 129, 208, &c. of the old edition in folio, that we cannot but acknowledge on one hand, that he met with great scruples in the pope's breast, and real difficulties on the part of the sacred college; that he applied himself with great assiduity and with equal success to surmount them; and that any but he would have had much to do to have conquered them; as is evident from what happened to the duke de Nevers, the cardinal de Retz, the marquis de Pisany, and others: that for his own part he is very far from approving the many subterfuges to which the court of Rome had often recourse in their formalities; and even that all this chicane made him often uneasy, as also the unfair dealing which, he complains, they used in the bull of absolution. However, in opposition to all this, a man may perceive on the other hand in these very places, and still more in all those passages that in any measure relate to the Protestants, the Jesuits, or the council of Trent, &c. that his eminence was not at all disturbed, that the affair of the king's absolution had passed under the restrictions of which M. de Sully complains so bitterly: whether it was that M. d'Ossat did not perceive therein the pretended lesion of the honour of the crown, and the prejudice done to the liberties of the Gallican church, which I leave to the learned to determine; or whether he believed that all these precautions became necessary for the interest of religion; or lastly, whether he were not biassed in favour of the maxims of the league: and yet all this does not hinder me from subscribing to the encomiums which our best historians have given this cardinal; and in the last place Amelot de la Houssaye, in the life he gives us of him, prefixed to the edition of his letters, to which I refer the reader. The abbé du Perron and M. de Villeroi, had likewise done considerable service to Henry IV. in the affair of his absolution. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 210, and seq.

publish, and cause to be received, the council of Trent: and lastly, that the Jesuits should be again established in France. Those conditions which regarded the Protestants and the council of Trent were not complied with, the rest were.

Those persons who thought the king received laws from the Pope upon this occasion, ought to lay the blame upon du-Perron, and still more upon Arnaud d'Ossat, then agent for this affair at Rome. These two ecclesiastics were so far from rejecting the above conditions, that they would have been grieved if they had not been insisted upon; if any credit may be given to a memorial which was many years afterwards sent me from Rome, and which I shall speak of fully in its place: it affords a complete proof of what I have just advanced, at least with regard to d'Ossat.

This memorial states two things relating to the king's absolution, which proves one of the principal articles: that the pope and the whole sacred college were so ardently desirous of the king's applying to Rome for this ceremony, that they could not conceal their fears, when they were sometimes informed that Henry would be brought to despise it, or look upon it as useless; and this the author proves from their own letters: secondly, that d'Ossat, instead of informing the king of this disposition in the court of Rome, which he would have done had his honour and dignity been of the smallest consequence to him, on the contrary gave this prince to understand, that he could not obtain a reconciliation with his holiness, but by offering an incroachment upon the liberties of the Gallican church, and purchasing it by those conditions already mentioned. Henry, however, rewarded his two agents with the highest dignities in the prelacy, In three days his majesty arrived at Peronne, where he was immediately saluted by Balagny. This man, who by an excess of ridiculous vanity, had just lost his government,* his fortune, his wife, and his honour, instead of blushing for his folly, and concealing himself from reproach, affected to shew himself, talked big, and in this state, which was indeed the fittest for him, expected all that regard which is generally paid to unfortunate sovereigns.

The king resolving to attempt all things to relieve Calais, came to Boulogne: he found that his troops were not sufficient to storm the camp of the besiegers, and therefore took the only course that now remained, which was to endeavour to throw himself into the place, at the head of a considerable reinforcement. Twice he embarked with this design, but contrary winds forced him back again to land. While he despaired of accomplishing his enterprise, Matelet, governor of Foix, came to him, and offered to make a third attempt to enter Calais, promising that if he would give him four or five hundred gentlemen, he would so manage, either by sea, or land, that he would open himself a passage. The king praising his resolution, gave him the escort he demanded; with which Matelet succeeded in his design, and entered Calais, after having surmounted a thousand obstacles;* but the glory of this brave action was soon obliterated, when it, appeared that he had only joined the garrison to be infected with their fears, and to consent to a capitulation: and the king had the mortification to march to Calais, only to see it surrendered before his face.†

---

* [See vol. I. p. 442] M. de Perefixe says, that Cambrai was taken by famine: others, as Matthieu, blame the misunderstanding that subsisted between the duke de Nevers and de Bouillon for it; and others again the negligence of Balagny. The Memoirs of the League, tom. VI. remark, that three companies of Swiss, not having had their pay given them, compelled him to deliver up the place. All the historians have extolled the courage of Renée de Clermont, the wife of Balagny, and sister to the brave Bussy d'Amboise, who, after having, to no purpose, done all she could to inspire resolution into the garrison and her husband, did not choose to survive the loss of her principality, and died either of famine or grief. "And "here in one article, is an abstract of the greatest disgrace that "France has suffered from foreigners in the memory of man." So speaks d'Aubigné, in concluding the 9th chapter, liv. iv. tom III. of his history, in which he has collected the taking of Catelet, la Capelle, Ardres, Cambrai, Calais, and the defeat at Dourlens. Balagny tells a Spanish officer, who seemed surprised at seeing him take his mistress along with him, and in the same boat, that love softened all the cross accidents of fortune: "Right, replied the Spaniard, "and especially at present, as you will have less to do than you "have had before." P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 219. [See a full account of the siege of Cambrai in Bentivoglio's Wars of Flanders, pt. III. b. ii. According to this author Baligny appears to have acted like a brave man, and not to have yielded till an insurrection of the citizens, aided by a body of Swiss, rendered longer opposition impossible. Edit.]

If it be asked where, during this time were all those French noblemen and officers who were so forward in advising the war; and why they allowed the king to bear the whole burthen of it, and suffer repeated losses, it must be owned, to the dishonour of the French name, that they expected to draw advantages to themselves by the misfortunes their imprudence occasioned, and their negligence augmented; and formed, in the mean time, projects more fatal to the king's authority than the bloodiest foreign war. These projects I shall mention presently.

---

* Historians do not agree as to this action. Some, as de Thou and d'Aubigné, by saying nothing at all of it, seem to call it in question; others ascribe it to the sieur de Campagnole the younger, Davila and our Memoirs to Matelet, governor of Foix. [Bentivoglio ascribes this action to Campagnole, who was governor of Boulogn, and gives a very particular description of the whole affair. See Wars of Flanders, pt. III. b. iii. Edit.]

Queen Elizabeth offered to defend Calais against the Spaniards, upon condition that the place were put into the hands of the English. Sancy, who was then ambassador at London, made answer to the queen, that the king his master would rather have it in the hands of the Spaniards than in those of the English: and Henry IV. said himself, "If he were to be bit, he had rather it was by a lion than a lioness;" and this was the reason that Queen Elizabeth afterwards refused to besiege that town, while Henry IV. lay before that of Amiens, though they offered then, to put it into her hands by way of security. Matthieu, ibid. p. 223.

† It was taken on the 24th of April, 1596. Edit.

The king, equally superior to good and bad fortune, instead of appearing dispirited by the loss of Calais, or indulging in complaints, exclaimed to those about him, with a countenance full of serenity: "Courage, my friends; it cannot be helped; Calais "is taken, and even under some very unfortunate "circumstances; but our courage must not be "dauntened on this account, since the brave are best "trained in the school of adversity; it is the fate "of war, sometimes to win and sometimes to lose; "the enemy have had their turn, and with the "assistance of God (who never abandoned me "when I implored that assistance fervently) we will "have ours. One thing at least consoles me, that "there has been no fault on my part, as I think I "left nothing untried which was in my power to "succour my friends and adherents: and I would "even believe that all those who have been em"ployed in this business have acquitted themselves "worthily and loyally: let us not therefore com"plain or grieve any longer, nor blame or reproach "any one: on the contrary, let us make honourable "mention of the dead, and bestow those praises "which are due to the noble defence made by the "living; and above all, let us endeavour to find "out means whereby we may take vengeance, with "interest, upon our enemies, and act in such a way "that this place shall not remain as many days in "the hands of the Spaniards, as our predecessors "suffered it to be years in possession of the English."

After having consoled those who had been driven out of Calais, and furnished them with many things they were in want of, the king provided for the security of Boulogne, Abbeville, Montreuil, Monthulin,* and other towns and castles, and marched towards Saint-Quintin, fearing lest the enemy, who were not far from those quarters, should surprise some of the nobles, and general officers who came thither separately. They chose this opportunity for the execution of a design which they had formed, before they left Paris. The duke of Montpensier was the person whom they charged with this commission, not because he was more disaffected than the rest, but because his temper was most easy, and his understanding the weakest. He accosted the king at Saint-Quintin; and, in the name of the principal French nobility, proposed to him, as the only means of subduing his enemies, to resign to the governors of provinces the property of their governments, with an hereditary right to them, requiring nothing of them but their allegiance.

It is not easy to comprehend how a proposal, which had so manifest a tendency to throw France into that state of anarchy, which, in former ages, had filled it with blood and horror, could proceed from the mouth of a Frenchman, a prince, and what is more, a prince of the royal blood. Henry, struck with astonishment at the prodigious insolence of this affront offered to the royal dignity, could not for some moments utter a word, while the duke of Montpensier continuing a speech which had been studied long before, endeavoured to prove to his majesty, that while those governors, or rather those little princes, obliged themselves to maintain troops always ready for his service, he would never be again reduced to such a situation as he was in at present, to appear before his enemies without soldiers to oppose them. The king, though agitated with various passions, discovered none towards the duke but pity for the unworthy part he played. He stopped him from proceeding farther, by telling him, without the least resentment, that he had already heard too much; and that he was convinced those French nobles had taken advantage of the easiness of his temper, to make him the bearer of a proposal, the whole meanness of which he was not sensible of, he who was a prince of the blood, and nearer the crown than himself had formerly been. The king added much more to the same purpose, with equal calmness, and was so far from being apprehensive that he should be reduced to yield to such a proposition, and so determined to suffer a thousand deaths, if possible, rather than bring such a load of infamy upon the royal dignity, that he had not even the thought of entering into any discussion of this project, or of uttering a single word in answer to it.*

---

* Cities and forts in Picardy.

The duke of Montpensier became sensible of his error, by the air and tone with which his majesty spoke to him; he blushed, and asked pardon for it, and intreated the king never to remember that he had been capable of thus degrading himself from his rank. The king, after having shewn the duke the whole extent of his error, directed him how, in some measure, to repair it, with those who had prevailed upon him to commit it; and assured him, that he for his own part would forget it entirely, and still regard him as a kinsman. The duke of Montpensier agreed to take the first opportunity that offered, when the authors of this insolent proposal brought it again on the carpet, to declare that he had reflected well upon the commission they had given him; that they might send their proposal by any other person, since he absolutely disapproved of it; that if he were ever to mention it to his majesty, it should be with a design to dissuade him from it; and that they might depend upon his using his utmost endeavours to hinder its taking effect. He performed this task so exactly, and with an air so natural, that he wholly disconcerted all those noblemen, and left them no inclination to make any attempts on his fidelity for the future.

---

* "We are all gentlemen," said Henry IV. sometimes before the princes of the blood.

It was therefore to reduce the king to the necessity of making them his equals, that the princes and governors of provinces in France so ill performed their promise of assisting him with troops. The duke of Bouillon was one of those who sold his services the dearest. His majesty, not doubting but he had a part in the plot, was willing to have a proof of it from the duke's perplexity, without letting him know that he was informed of it by other means. Bouillon did not want art and eloquence enough to conceal whatever he designed should not be known; but, besides that Henry possessed in no less degree the art of penetrating into the thoughts of those with whom he conversed, the presence of a sovereign is alone capable of abashing a man conscious of any secret guilt towards him. The king began by convincing himself that the duke of Montpensier had not betrayed their late discourse to the duke of Bouillon; after which he introduced the defeat of Dourlens, by asking him plainly, and with a kind of confidence, how it happened that he had been disappointed in those certain correspondences which, as he said, he carried on in Liege, Namur, and many other places in Luxembourg and Hainault, upon which he was sensible the war had been undertaken?

Bouillon, embarrassed by the question, and that air of simplicity with which it was proposed, instead of giving a direct answer concerning his pretended correspondences, fell into long speeches, without meaning or end, which betrayed him more effectually than the most sincere confession could have done. He accused every one; the duke of Nevers, who he said had corrupted his officers and obstructed his levies; the English for not making the promised diversion; the Dutch for taking advantage of this conjuncture to increase their power on the side of Over-Issel and Friesland. Upon which the duke, who sought only to turn the conversation still more from the first subject, told the king, that the true cause of the misfortune which had lately happened, was, that his majesty had no person of consequence, and on whom he could have an absolute dependance, at the court of London, to hasten the supplies that had been promised there; and at the same time offered himself for this embassy, and even solicited it earnestly. The king being of opinion that it would answer no purpose to press the duke any farther upon his fault, ceased to mention it; and reflecting that he should not lose much by his absence, consented at last to the embassy to England. Accordingly his commission was made out, and the duke of Bouillon, a few days after, departed for that kingdom.*

It was from his majesty himself that I had an account of this conversation with the duke of Bouillon, as likewise that with the duke of Montpensier before mentioned.

The king had no sooner quitted Bouillon, than reflecting that the duke, instead of having any design to serve him usefully at the court of London, had possibly only solicited that employment to give bad impressions there of his conduct, or at least to labour only for his own interest, he sent Jaquinot for me early in the morning, to communicate this fear to me. I kneeled on a cushion at his bedside, and his majesty asked me immediately what was said, and what I, in particular, thought of the long conversation he had just held with the duke of Bouillon. I replied, that every one guessed his own way; and that probably the affair of Ham and Dourlens, and the proposal made by the duke of Montpensier, made up the greatest part of it. The king told me that I was mistaken; that he was too well acquainted with the duke of Bouillon's disposition, to doubt that any reproaches upon those occasions, instead of correcting, would only serve to throw him into an open revolt. His majesty afterwards, repeating exactly all that has been related concering the embassy to England, proposed to me to accompany the duke of Bouillon thither, that I might carefully observe his conduct.

In courts every thing is brought about by artifice. The king after his conversation with the duke of Bouillon, telling his council for the finances, that he had sent the duke to England, these gentlemen, after conferring together, found nothing so fit to satisfy their hatred of me, as to persuade the king to join me with the duke of Bouillon. My abilities for negociation were praised, an honour which they were resolved to deprive me of, when they had once succeeded in removing me from the king, who not penetrating into their views, approved of the proposal. But I did not so easily fall into the snare: I shewed his majesty the true motive of these gentlemen's feigned generosity with regard to me. From the moment that the duke of Bouillon had discovered that I watched his conduct, and disconcerted his projects, he would not have failed to break with me; and such a genius as he possessed, when animated with malice, would have suggested to him the means of throwing upon me the blame of all the faults he might commit, and all the good he might neglect to do. My enemies knew this as well as I; his majesty was convinced by my reasons, and pressed me no farther.

---

* This conversation between the king and Bouillon must have taken place before the reduction of Calais, since the latter was in London when that event happened; see note at the end of this book. Edit.

The gentlemen of the council did not stop here: when they came again to the king, they were the first to confess that it was with reluctance they joined me to the duke of Bouillon; but since the duke was to stay but a short time at London,* they had pitched upon me to take his place with the same title and equal honours. All was alike to them, provided they could get rid of me. The king was again influenced by their opinions, and some days after, declared his intention to me; ordering me to make preparations immediately for this voyage; to provide myself with money, and to dispose my wife to follow me, if I chose to have her with me; which, however, he did not think necessary, since I should not, he said, be absent above seven or eight months at most. The king perceiving my reluctance, accompanied this order with the most kind and obliging expressions his imagination could suggest; he told me that the present perplexed situation of his affairs hindering him from giving me the sole direction of the finances, he should reproach himself for exposing to the dangers of a long and furious siege the only man in the kingdom whom he thought worthy to fill that important post. His majesty had just then declared himself publicly concerning the siege of La-Fere.

---

* He staid from April till September. See Lodge's Illustrations, vol. III. p. 76. Edit.

While the king was speaking, I was struck with astonishment at the obstinate persecution of my enemies, and the depth of their malice. Under the appearance of a title of honour vain in itself, and fatal in its consequences, they took away, and perhaps for ever, all opportunities of advancing me: For who in my absence would be solicitous for my interest? Who would hinder them from prolonging my stay out of the kingdom, till affairs having taken a fixed and durable state in France, there would be nothing left for a man who, by so long an absence, would be regarded as a stranger. These reflections kept me firm in my resolution not to go. I intreated the king not to force me to a journey to which I felt an invincible repugnance; and I had the good fortune to find that Henry was of himself disposed to believe that I should be of more use to him at Paris than London, during the siege he was going to undertake: he therefore sent me thither to facilitate his supplies of money, to furnish him with whatever was necessary towards carrying on the siege, to receive his orders there, make one in his council, and direct its resolutions. Had the choice of my revenge been in my own power, I could not have fixed upon any more effectual.*

---

* The whole of the Memoirs, from the account of the retreat of the constable of Castille (ante, p.65.) till the conclusion of the next book, is so very confused, and in many instances even incorrect, that it may not be thought improper to give a brief relation here according to some of the best historians of the regular succession of events from the above period to the beginning of the year 1597, when Henry IV. laid siege to Amiens.

While the king, as we have seen, was victorious in Franche Comté, the count de Fuentes, general of the Spanish forces, laid siege to Cambrai in September, 1595, of which he made himself master in the following month. This unpleasant piece of intelligence reached the king about the time he received notice that the pope, after much hesitation and obstinacy, had granted him his absolution; and it was probably through the entreaties of Philip of Spain that he now did it, for Henry sent his secretary Lomenie to England in the beginning of October, to acquaint Elizabeth of the circumstance, and to inform her that four cardinals were appointed to give him absolution with all proper solemnity, but that their chief business was to draw him into a peace with Spain: by this and some other expressions, which it is not necessary to mention here, Henry probably thought to alarm the queen, and thereby obtain farther supplies from England; but the event did not answer his expectations. He, however, derived many important advantages in the interior of his kingdom, from this act of the pope: the duke of Maïenne, having no longer any pretext for his conduct, yielded, after obtaining very advantageous terms, and afterwards performed his obeisance at Monçeaux, where he was graciously received. The marquis de St. Sorlin his half-brother also followed his example, and not long after the duke de Joyeuse, the chief of the league in Languedoc, and who still held the city of Thoulouse and the parts adjoining, likewise made his peace through the intercession of his brother the cardinal. The duke of Guise, about this time gained Marseilles for the king. The duke of Mercœur, only, remained inflexible, though the king granted him a prolongation of the truce he had previously obtained.

The king having quitted Franche Comté, in November 1595 laid siege to La-Fere, in Picardy, which he carried on very slowly all the remainder of this year and the beginning of the next, when the archduke Albert, who had succeeded his brother Ernest in the government of the Low Countries, and assumed the command of the Spanish army, resolved, with a view to oblige the king to raise the siege of La-Fere, to besiege Calais, where he suddenly appeared in the middle of April, 1596, with a large force, and completely invested the place. As soon as Henry learnt this, he quitted La-Fere, and marched directly to Boulogne, to endeavour to relieve Calais, having first dispatched Sancy to London to entreat Elizabeth to send him immediate succours, and presently after the duke de Bouillon; these two envoys succeeded in inducing the queen to order a force of eight thousand men to be immediately collected, under the command of the earl of Essex, but before the troops could be embarked news was received that Calais had surrended after a resistance of about twelve days. The king having thus failed in his object returned to La-Fere, after placing garrisons in Boulogne, Montrueil, and Ardres, but this latter was soon after besieged by the Spaniards, and the count of Belin, the governor, making a very feeble resistance, it was yielded by capitulation about the same time that the king made himself master of La-Fere. With these two actions the campaign in this quarter terminated, the archduke entered Artois, and cantoned his army about St. Omers, where he fixed his head-quarters; and the king, on learning this, dismissed the nobility and gentry who accompanied him, and leaving marshal Biron with about four thousand men to secure some places in Picardy, returned to Paris.

The succours which Elizabeth had intended for the relief of Calais were disbanded, but the queen lent Henry a sum of money, for which his two ambassadors were security: she afterwards concluded a new treaty offensive and defensive, which was negociated by Sancy and the duke de Bouillon, the principal articles of which were, that the queen should furnish four thousand men for the defence of Picardy and Normandy; that Henry should find the like number if England were invaded, and that neither should conclude a peace without the consent of the other. The queen swore to this treaty in August, 1596, and in the September following the earl of Shrewsbury was sent over to see the king swear to it, which he did at Rouen on October the 19th: the earl also invested the king with the order of the garter. Not long after, Sir Thomas Baskerville carried over two thousand men into Picardy.

While the king was engaged at Paris or Rouen, in which latter city he had assembled the states of the kingdom, the Spaniards made some overtures for a peace, and secret negociations actually took place; but they were suddenly interrupted by the seizure of Amiens, which

Portocarrero, governor of Dourlens, surprised in the beginning of March, 1597. This event gave great uneasiness to the king, who a few days after attempted to surprise it in his turn; but in this he failed, and was therefore obliged to besiege it in form, and gave the command of the army to marshal Biron, who during the siege made an attempt to surprise Arras, but without success. The garrison of Amiens made a resolute defence, and did not yield till the latter part of September following, after many fruitless attempts of the archduke Albert to relieve it. See Camden; Birch's Negociations; Bentivoglio's Wars of Flanders; and Perefixe's Life of Henry IV. EDIT.

BOOK VIII.

1596 to 1597.

I. Siege of La-Fere; The king taken ill. Military enterprizes; some executed; others fail. Death of the duke of Nemours, and of the duke of Nevers. Embezzlement of the finances. Rosny goes to Henry at Amiens: his adventure with an astrologer. Madam de Liancourt in great danger. Rosny's journey to Rouen: he is deputed to the princess to prevail upon her to espouse the duke of Montpensier: the treatment he receives from her: in danger of being digraced upon this occasion: recovers the favour of the princess.—II. Success of the king's arms in different provinces. Opposition made by the financiers to Rosny's being appointed one of the council of finances; Henry's irresolution upon this head, who at last places him in the council.—III. The duke of Maïenne concludes a treaty with the king, and comes to his majesty at Monçeaux. Rosny goes to visit the generalities: calumnies of his enemies upon this occasion: his journey of great use to the king. Rosny's disputes with Sancy: he discovers the artifices and frauds of the council of finances.—IV. The assembly *des notables* held at Rouen. Reflections upon the states of the kingdom. Good council given by Sully to the king. The result of this assembly. The council of reason established, and afterwards suppressed. Rosny's labours in the finances.

I. The motive which had determined the king to undertake so difficult a siege as that of La-Fere, was that, his enemies having, after their successes, separated their troops, he would not suffer his own, who had at last reassembled, to remain idle, there being a necessity to secure Picardy, already shaken by so many repeated losses. Had I had the liberty of disposing of myself as I pleased, I should have chosen to have continued, during this siege, with the king, whose too great solicitude for my safety I could by no means approve: but I did not dare to refuse the commission which would detain me in Paris; and his majesty, to render this order less displeasing, assured me, that he would not for a long time attempt any thing considerable against La-Fere; and that some time or other, he would permit me to make a journey thither. In reality I did so several times, but I had no sooner arrived, than the necessity of providing for the subsistence of his troops obliged me to return again immediately. I comforted myself, however, with the thought, that through my diligence the army being supplied with every thing it had occasion for, I might flatter myself with having, in some measure, contributed to the success of this siege, which lasted six months, and was the longest that Henry was ever engaged in. This place, besides its advantageous fortifications, had a very numerous garrison, composed of chosen soldiers, and commanded by two excellent officers, the one a Frenchman,* high steward of Montelimart; and the other a Spaniard, named Osorio.

Beringhen,† at the persuasions of an engineer, who was his friend and kinsman, and had come expressly for that purpose from Flanders, where he lived, took it into his head that it was possible to lay all La-Fere under water; and, upon the assurances of his friend, was so confident of success, that the king, though contrary to his own judgment, suffered him to make the attempt: it would indeed have shortened the siege; but it is to be observed, that almost all projects of this kind are liable to fail: the slightest mistake is sufficient to ruin them, and it seldom happens but some mistake is made. The project of turning the course of the Tesin formerly cost Francis I. the loss of a battle, together with his liberty.* In one of these journies I made to the camp I found this proposal upon the carpet. I looked upon the execution of it to be impossible, and I combated it with all my force: but the engineer wanted not plausible reasons to oppose to ours. According to him, it was an attempt that would cost but little time and trouble; all they had to do was to raise a causeway: this they performed; and the water destroying their work two or three times, they renewed it as often; at last it became proof against the water, but the river did not rise to the height they expected: it is true, indeed, that it wanted only six feet, but that was sufficient to force them to abandon the work,† after having consumed in it a great deal of time and money.

---

* His name was Colas; the Spaniards had promised to make him count de La-Fere.

† Peter de Beringhen was himself a Fleming, and born at Brussels.

The king falling sick at Traversy, where his head-quarters were, the siege of La-Fere suffered a still longer delay. As soon as the news was brought me I flew to him, and never left him till his health was perfectly re-established. His sickness was considerable enough to make me apprehend for France the greatest loss it could possibly sustain. The governor of La-Fere, finding himself in want of every thing that could enable him to hold out a longer time, surrendered the place to the king, who caused it to be repaired; and at the intreaty of madam de Liancourt, he appointed her son Cæsar to be governor, of it, Manicamp, a kinsman* of this lady, performing all the functions of that office, in quality of his lieutenant.

---

* When besieging Pavia. See Guicciardini, book xv.

† D'Aubigné does not speak of it so contemptibly, ch. 12, ibid. "The causeway," says he, "having made the river Oise flow back "within La-Fere, it spoiled all the magazines they had in the "lower parts and cellars of the town. It was a large machine, "above a quarter of a league in length. Such an undertaking "shews, that neither the king nor the kingdom was dispirited un- "der their pressures and disadvantages."

His majesty marching afterwards to the frontiers of Artois, took the castle of Imbercourt by assault; and thought to have done the same, by petard, with the city of Arras. Marshal Biron † was the cause of the ill success of this last enterprize, by not providing himself with a sufficient quantity of petards: the three first they applied played tolerably well, but the fourth being thrown, without effect, into the ditch, with the person that directed it, several of our men were killed and wounded by it. It was, indeed, a mortifying thought, that a conquest of such importance, which would have secured Amiens from the misfortune which soon after happened to it, should be lost for want of a petard or two more. Biron, to avoid the reproaches he had reason to expect, went to discharge his rage upon the country about Bapaume, where he made horrible devastation.

The ill success of the attempt upon Arras was sufficiently compensated by many favourable events that happened at the end of the preceding year and beginning of this, which I shall pass over slightly as usual; these were, the reduction of Toulouse,‡ the prosperity of the king's arms in Provence, and the reunion of the chiefs of the league in the king's party. Joyeuse,* who had quitted the habit of a monk, to resume that of a soldier, and paid himself with usury for the mortifications of a cloister, made a treaty with the king about that time. The duke of Nemours followed his example; † but just as it was upon the point of being concluded, he died with vexation,‡ as some believe, for the bad success of so many great projects. Saint-Sorlin, his brother, continued the treaty for himself. The death of the duke of Nevers || delivered the king

---

* Philip de Longueval, sieur de Manicamp.

† Biron, in his turn, loudly exclaimed against the king's avarice.

‡ As to these facts, consult the histories before mentioned for the year 1595 and 1596.

---

* Henry de Joyeuse. He again entered himself among the capuchins, and died there, under the name of father Ange.

† Henry de Savoie-Nemours.

‡ "He voided, by his mouth and pores, every drop of blood in his body." Perefixe, ibid. Cayet gives a very moving description, of it, ibid. p. 519.

|| Louis de Gonzague died of a dysentry at Nesse in 1595, aged fifty six, of chagrin, others say, because that when he talked with Henry IV. advising him with regard to Calais, this prince made answer, "How can you advise me on this head? you who have never been nigher that town than seven leagues." Though M. de Thou, liv. cxiii. and Brantome, tom. III. p. 259, very much extol him, the charge which the duke de Sully brings against him, of having been always a very expensive servant to his master, may be easily made out, even from this general's own letters to Henry IV. of which we have a collection in de Nevers's Memoirs, tom. II. p. 207, 376. "If your majesty," says he to him in one of his letters, "cannot or will not come this length, I shall remove so far, that "there will be no grounds to expect any succours from me. In truth, 'sire, you do not make me returns suitable to the manner in which 'I serve you; and it appears to all the world that you do not "value me much.—I never was treated in the manner you treat "me by the kings your predecessors; from them I received many "favours, whereby I was obliged to serve them implicitly; and I "am yet to receive the first favour from your majesty. If fatal "and ruinous commissions be not the favours I receive from you, "I will be so free as to tell you, that I have received no other "since you were pleased to order me into these parts." &c. p. 348. And there are a great many more letters in the same strain. It is from these the duke of Sully, to whom Henry IV. communicated

likewise from a troublesome useless servant. Lastly, the duke of Maïenne, now absolutely disgusted with the treachery of the Spaniards, began to think seriously upon means to restore himself to the favour of the king.

The king thought it of such importance to make himself master of Arras, that he resolved to besiege it in form. I was the only person to whom he communicated this design; secrecy was of such consequence on this great occasion, that he durst not trust any one with the care of making observations upon the place, and therefore undertook that task himself. I had continued the whole winter at Paris, employed in his majesty's service, and sometimes made little excursions to Moret, in which I took great delight. One day, when I was busy in superintending my workmen, who were levelling the high grounds about two thousand paces from my house, to bring thither two rivulets which form those two sheets of water which are at present near the great alley, a courier from madam de Liancourt arrived, who brought me a letter from this lady, and another from his majesty,* in which he informed me of his designs upon Arras, and the methods by which he hoped to succeed. By this letter the king appeared to be very much enraged against the "impositions "and rogueries (these were his words) of eight "gluttons;" whom he had employed, "those ras-"cals," added he, "with that prodigious number of

---

all his cabinet secrets, formed a judgment as to the dispositions of the duke de Nevers, and not from those he writ to several other persons, which shew great attachment and zeal for the king's person.

* This letter, which is given at length in the original memoirs, is dated from Amiens, the 15th of April, 1596: the king must have been then advancing from La-Fere to attempt the relief of Calais. See note, p. 82. Edit.

" intendants, who have brought in all their male and " female gossips, feast together, and have consumed " above a hundred thousand crowns, a sum large " enough to drive all the Spaniards out of France." This was, indeed, exactly true, which I shall make sufficiently clear when I enter into an account of the finances; at present I shall only relate two or three circumstances.

The council of the finances supposing they would be ordered to discharge the accounts for the supplies which had been furnished during the siege of La-Fere (in which, however they were mistaken, as the king ordered me to do this) had engaged Descures La Corbiniere, and some other persons to procure those supplies, without admitting them to have more than very small shares; and the council afterwards treated, under these borrowed names, with tradesmen and purveyors, who commonly served them at the lowest prices, while they contrived to charge to the king thrice the real expense. The following fact I had from the king himself: very considerable arrears were due from the royal treasury to the Swiss soldiers, German horse, and other foreigners in the French pay: the council suborned a man named Otoplote, who gave the receivers deputed by these foreigners to understand, that they must never expect to be paid, unless they consented to reduce their demands to such a moderate sum as could be given them, without draining the exchequer. The reduction was agreed to; but the gentlemen of the council charged the full sum to the King's account, and by this means robbed his majesty, or rather the lawful creditors, of the overplus. To these many other frauds of the same kind may be added. These gentlemen revelled in luxury, while the king and his household were in want of necessaries. A few days after that on which his majesty wrote to me, he sent to inform them that he had occasion for eight hundred thousand crowns, for an enterprise of great importance (the siege of Arras); he intreated, he conjured them to let him have this sum, but in vain; all the answer he could obtain was, that so far from being able to furnish him with what he demanded, they knew not how to supply the expenses of his household. It is, indeed, curious to see how this household was supported: "I am," says this amiable and worthy prince, in a letter to me, "very "near my enemies, with hardly a horse to carry me "into the battle, nor a complete suit of armour to "put on; my shirts are all ragged, my doublets out "at elbow,* my kettle is seldom on the fire, and "these two last days I have been obliged to dine "where I could, for my purveyors have informed "me, that they have not wherewithal to furnish my "table." Those belonging to the gentlemen of the council were better provided. Henry, in his letter, deplored these monstrous abuses, less on his own account than on his people's, whom he said he looked upon as his children, since heaven had given him no others, and hinted his design of assembling the states of the kingdom, to consider of a remedy for all these misdemeanors.

I obeyed the order the king gave me to burn his letter, but not till I had taken a copy it; and the reasons for keeping it secret no longer subsisting, I think it my duty to publish the contents, as a proof of the wisdom and goodness of this prince: his majesty concluded his letter with ordering me to come to him in Picardy, and to conduct his mistress thither. We were the only persons to whom he could disclose his thoughts with freedom. The letter from madam de Liancourt was very short; in it she informed me, that she would set out the Tuesday following, in order to reach Maubuisson on the Wednesday, where she had a sister,* who was abbess, and that she would wait for me there.

---

* "I have seen upon him," says Le Grain, liv. viii. "a coat of "plain white cloth, that was very much soiled by his breast-plate, "and torn in the sleeves; as also hose that were much worn and "holed through on the sword-side."

I arrived at Corbeil on Saturday evening, intending to pass part of Sunday and all Monday at Paris, having some purchases to make for the palace. Just as I entered the street de la Coutellerie, I met a messenger from madam de Liancourt, who acquainted me, that that lady, having received fresh letters from the king, and also an account that her sister, the abbess of Maubuisson, was ill, she had determined to set out before the day appointed, and that I might join her at Pontoise. I suspected this lady had an intention to make her court to the king at the expense of my delay, I therefore altered my resolution, and told my people, that I would go that same night to Maubuisson, without stopping longer in Paris than while I refreshed myself, and baited my horses, which I did at the first inn I came to, whose sign was the three pigeons. The mention of this inn recalls to my remembrance a comical adventure which happened to me there.

Entering, without any attendants, into a very large room, I found a man walking about it very fast, and so absorbed in thought, that he neither saluted me, nor, as I imagine, perceived my entrance. Looking at him with more attention, every thing in his person, his manner, countenance, and dress, appeared to me very uncommon; his body was long and slender, his face thin and withered, his beard white and forked; he had a large hat on his head which covered his face, a long black cloak buttoned up to the collar, boots of an enormous size, a sword that trailed on the ground, and in his hand a large double bag, like those which are tied to saddle-bows. I asked him, in an elevated tone of voice, if he lodged in that room, and why he seemed in such profound contemplation? My man, affronted at the question, without saluting or even deigning to look at me, answered me rudely, that he was in his own chamber, and that he was thinking of his affairs, as I might do of mine. Although I was a little surprised at his impertinence, I nevertheless desired him very civilly to permit me to dine in that room; a proposal which he received grumbling, and answered by a refusal still less polite. That moment three of my gentlemen, my pages, and some footmen, entering the room, my brutal companion thought fit to soften his looks and words, pulled off his hat, and offered me every thing in his power: then suddenly eyeing me with a wild and fixed regard, asked me where I was going? I told him to meet the king: "What Sir," he replied, "has the king sent "for you? Pray tell me on what day and hour you "received his letters, and also at what hour you set "out?"

---

* Angelica d'Estrées.

It was not difficult to discover an astrologer by these questions, which he asked me with an invincible gravity. I was farther obliged to tell him my age, and to allow him to look into my hands.

After all these ceremonies were over, "Sir," said he with a look of surprise and respect, "I will resign my chamber to you very willingly; and there "are many more persons who, before long, will yield "their places to you with more regret than I do "mine." The more I pretended to be astonished at his great abilities, the more he endeavoured to give me proofs of them; he promised me riches, honours, and power (astrologers are seldom niggards), and added, that if I would inform him of the hour of my birth, he would tell me all that had or ever would happen to me; but without desiring to know my name, or telling me his, he thought proper, after these words, to leave me precipitately, excusing himself for not staying longer with me upon the necessity he was under of carrying some papers immediately to his advocate and procurator. I made no efforts to detain him: but it was not the same with my people, whom I perceived to be seized with fear and respect at every word this madman uttered. I diverted my wife with an account of this little adventure in the first letter I wrote to her.

In the evening I arrived at Maubuisson, which is a sort of suburb to Pontoise: there I met madam de Liancourt, with whom I took the road next day to Clermont. I rode about seven or eight hundred paces before the litter in which this lady was, and which was followed at some distance by a great unwieldy coach that carried her women; before and behind this coach marched several mules loaded with baggage. About a league from Clermont, where the road was very narrow, a steep hill on one side, and hanging valley on the other, leaving only room enough for two carriages to go a-breast, the coachman alighting upon some occasion or other, one of the mules passing near the side of the coach after it stopped, by its neighing, and the sound of its bells, so terrified the horses, which unfortunately happened to be young and skittish, that, taking the bit between their teeth, they drew the coach along with such rapidity, that meeting with two other mules, they overturned them in their course. The women within seeing a thousand dangers before their eyes, sent forth most lamentable cries. The coachman and muleteers endeavoured in vain to stop the horses: they were already within fifty paces of the litter, when madam Liancourt, alarmed by the noise, looked out, and screamed aloud; I also turned back and trembling at the danger in which I saw this lady and her attendants, without being able to assist them on account of the distance I was at, "Ah! friend," said I to La-Fond, "the women will be dashed in pieces; what will "become of us? and what will the king say!" While I was thus speaking, I pushed my horse forward with all my strength; but this was useless, and I should have arrived too late.

By one of those lucky chances, and which almost amount to a miracle, when the danger was greatest, the axle-tree of the fore wheels coming out of the nave by a violent shock which broke the pegs, the two wheels fell on each side, and the coach to the ground, and there stopped; one of the hindmost horses was thrown down by the shock, and kept in the other; the fore horses broke their traces, and passed so close to the litter, which was already at the extremity of the precipice, that it is plain if they had drawn the coach along with them, it would have been thrown over it. I stopped them and gave them to my domestics to hold, after which I flew to relieve madam de Liancourt, who was half dead with fear. I went next to the coach, and assisted the women to get out of it: they were for having the coachman hanged, and I was complaisant enough to give him two or three strokes with my cane. At length their terrors being entirely dissipated, and the carriage refitted, we resumed our journey; and, till we arrived at Clermont, I continued to ride close to madam de Liancourt's litter.

The king had set out for this place to meet his mistress, and arrived there a quarter of an hour after us. I did not fail to inform him immediately of what had happened; and while I was relating this adventure, I observed him attentively, and saw him turn pale and tremble. By these emotions, which I never perceived in him in the greatest dangers, it was easy to guess the violence of his passion for this lady.

The first moments were given to tenderness; after which the king consulted with me concerning the state of his affairs. That which was of most consequence at present, was the advice he had just received, by a letter from Rouen, that the duke of Montpensier, engaged more strictly than ever with the factious courtiers, had formed a very dangerous design against his royal person (this design was not explained); and that he was endeavouring by all sorts of methods, to gain himself dependents. The king was so much the more afflicted at this news, as he really loved the duke of Montpensier; and since policy hindered him from marrying his sister to the count of Soissons, or any of the princes of Lorrain, he was accustomed to look upon this prince as his future brother-in-law. He insisted that all other business should be postponed for this, and that I should go immediately to Rouen, and there either prevail upon the duke of Montpensier to return to his duty, or disconcert all his projects.

I staid six days at Rouen, and during that time I had sufficient reason to be convinced that the imputations against this prince were absolutely false, and an artifice of those who sought to throw the government into confusion. The duke of Montpensier, whose sentiments were very different from those he was accused of, suffered nothing to appear either in his actions or discourse, but what proved his strict attachment to the king. Those persons with whom he had had the closest connexions durst not in his presence avow any principle contrary to his, and had no hope of ever gaining him. One day when he did me the honour to invite me to dine with him, he talked to me of his resolutions with a candour and freedom which those who know him are sensible he could not have been capable of, had he been conscious of any secret guilt; and although he did not seek to justify himself, yet innocence carries along with it certain silent proofs, which cannot be resisted. He embraced me several times as a man who was dear to him by being faithfully devoted to the king; and on that account promised me his friendship, of which I have since had many instances. I mentioned to him his marriage with the princess Catherine, as an affair in which the king was as solicitous for his success as he himself could be. He confessed to me that he had never desired any thing with so much ardour as the possession of this princess, but that he durst not flatter himself with a hope of obtaining her, since he had not qualities, he said, capable of gaining her heart, or of subduing the ascendancy the count of Soissons had over him. I remained entirely satisfied with the duke of Montpensier's sentiments, and resolved to give a good account of them to the king. The remainder of the time I staid at Rouen I employed in renewing my former friendships with several persons, among whom were the first president de Boquemare, messieurs de Lanquetot, de Gremonville, de Bourgtheroulde, de Berniere, all members of the parliament; the abbés de Tiron and Martinbault; the sieurs de Motteville, des-Hameaux, de Mesnil, captain of the Old Palace; de La-Haulle, de Menencourt, du Mesnil-basil, and others by whom I was entertained, and whom I entertained in my turn. I lodged with La-Pile, one of my particular friends.

I found the king still at Amiens,* where, a few days after, arrived deputies from the principal cities of Provence and Languedoc, whose compliments and harangues his majesty received with his accustomed goodness. The deputy from Marseilles was heard with most pleasure, as he spoke for a city so ancient, and at all times so faithful to its sovereigns.

The king being not only undeceived by my report of the duke of Montpensier, but also more than ever convinced of his affection, resolved to make one more effort in his favour; and, unfortunately, I was the person whom he fixed upon to discharge this new commission. Having sent for me one night to his bedside, he told me that, under a pretence of visiting the princess Catherine, I must go and endeavour to prevail upon her to entertain for the duke of Montpensier those sentiments which, notwithstanding the sacrifice of the marriage contract, she still preserved for the count of Soissons.† After what had happened to me at Chartres upon this occasion, I thought it rashness to embark in an affair in which it was impossible to succeed. I conjured the king not to expose me, by this new attempt, to the eternal hatred of this princess and the count. My intreaties, pressing as they were, had no effect: he answered me only with the proverb, *a good master, a bold servant;* and I had nothing for it but obedience.

---

* The deputies of the town of Amiens speaking to him, in their addresses, of Henry the Third's goodness, "Yes," says he to them, "he was a good prince, but he was afraid of you; and for my part "I neither fear nor love you." Le Grain, Decade d'Henry le Grand, liv. x.

† She used to say to those who spoke to her on the king's part; "Above all things I wish to see the count." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 628.

My last resource was to request my commission in writing, that it might secure me against the fate of many courtiers, who have been disgraced for acting with a blind obedience to their master, against persons of the princess's rank; and, besides a letter of compliment to the princess, I required a second, in which he should state the motives of my journey, the nature of his orders, and the manner, and arguments by which he desired I should enforce them. When I made this proposal, the king, always tenacious of what concerned his honour, replied that his greatest enemies never demanded more security than his word. I answered by assuring him that I would never make use of it but in the last extremity; and that if the princess should appear disposed to comply with his desires, provided I could convince her that I acted solely by his authority, this writing would not then be necessary. The king yielded to this last argument; and being furnished with this authentic document, I took the road to Fontainebleau, where the princess then was, extremely perplexed with the part I had taken.

I staid only a day at Paris, from whence I went to the princess, who waited for me with some impatience, the king having informed her some days before by Loménie of my intended journey, without explaining the occasion of it. She had flattered herself (for love, if it fears all, hopes all likewise) that I might possibly be coming to make the count of Soissons happy; and this thought made me happy also, as long as it lasted, which was the two first days, which I thought necessary to devote to civility and compliments. She altered her behaviour on the third, when she found that I only introduced the subject of her love, to declare to her that the count of Soissons had, by his imprudent conduct, incensed the king to such a degree, that she ought no longer to think of making him her husband; for I judged it proper to begin by removing one, before I endeavoured to introduce the other.

Although, in speaking of the count of Soissons, I made use of the gentlest terms my imagination could furnish me with, he had in the princess so ardent a defender, that in her answer she intermingled the harshest epithets, and menaces of depriving me of the king's favour. Astonished at so sudden and violent a rage, I thought of nothing but appeasing her, otherwise my commission would have that moment been at an end. I therefore intreated her to hear me, and beginning a speech, of which I knew not what the end was likely to be, I first introduced a long and eloquent protestation of my respect, attachment, and earnest desire to serve her; during which I racked my imagination in vain, to furnish me with the means of appeasing her; for what it was most necessary she should hear, namely the count of Soissons' insolent behaviour to the king, was precisely that which would enrage her the most. I ventured however to break through this difficulty, and conjured her to reflect seriously whether this prince had, by his whole conduct, deserved that the king should be solicitous to raise his fortune. It was the hope only that a discourse, whose beginning was so disagreeable, would end in a manner more favourable to her passion, that induced the princess to pay any attention to me; which I judged by those emotions of anger and disdain which overspread her face alternately with blushes and paleness.

I continued to lay before her, with all the moderation imaginable, the many causes of discontent which the count had given the king, particularly his behaviour in Burgundy, certainly inexcusable even in the eyes of a mistress; I used, however, the precaution to repeat frequently, that, for my own part, I believed the count to be very far from entertaining those sentiments which his conduct gave room to attribute to him: I dwelt upon the consequences it must naturally produce, at a time when a process was actually commenced against the princess of Condé, by which the prince her son, still a Huguenot, lived uncertain of his condition, and in a kind of banishment at Rochelle. This affair being of the number of those in which just right alone is not sufficient, the friends of the young prince would have succeeded with difficulty, in destroying those accusations against the mother, and securing to the son his rank of first prince of the blood and presumptive heir to the crown, if the king, by suppressing the instruments of the process, as he did at last, had not interested himself in the justification of the one, and the defence of the other.* I made the princess sensible that the count was master of his own fate; but that he made so bad a use of the king's favourable dispositions towards him, that he would infallibly oblige him to engage in the interests of his rival. In short, I said enough to have made any other think he was greatly to be blamed.

---

* The princess of Condé was accused of being accessory to the death of her husband. See an account of the whole affair in vol. i. p. 170. Edit.

The princess, who, during this discourse, had fallen into a reverie, occasioned more by vexation than prudent reflections, here interrupted me, to hasten to that favourable conclusion of which I had given her a hint, and which seemed farther off in proportion as I lengthened my speech. But having once begun, she was not sufficiently mistress of herself to stop where she intended; and giving way to the rage that filled her breast, she fell a second time upon me, who, she said, only sought to deceive her, and upon the king her brother, "who "loves me so much," said she ironically, "that he "cannot resolve to part with me;" and as a proof, entered into a long enumeration of the suitors she had had, amongst whom it would have been easy to prove that she had missed of an establishment through her own fault, as when she refused the king of Scotland.* In the course of her complaints she neither spared the queen her mother, nor king Henry III. who, she said, had all conspired to keep her single. Her stock of rancour being almost exhausted by so many invectives, the softer passion took its place, and naturally turned her thoughts on the count of Soissons, a subject which she treated not less amply, but in a manner very different from the former.

At length, recollecting that her design, by interrupting me, was to hear that advice by which, I told her all past errors might be repaired, she asked me positively what that advice was, but with the same tone of malignant raillery; by which I was still better convinced that her mind was irritated beyond the power of human eloquence to cure: however, pressed by the question, I replied, "By "the count of Soissons doing the very contrary of "what he has hitherto done." The observations I made while I pronounced these few words, were sufficient to convince me, that it would be to no purpose to propose the duke of Montpensier to her; I therefore considered my commission to be at an end, or rather absolutely useless, and all I aimed at now was to draw myself out of this embarrassment by expressions so vague and general, that the princess could not take any advantage of them against me, nor afterwards assert that I had failed in my promises to her. Nothing is more easy than this kind of discourse. I entered at first upon the necessary duties of crowned heads, and expatiated a long time upon this subject; from whence, however, I drew no other inference, but that the king could not be reproached with any dereliction of his. This introduced another set discourse, divided into several heads, wherein Henry's gentleness of disposition was not slightly discussed; and to conclude by something still clearer, since the princess, contrary to my expectations, had patience enough to listen to so long a harangue, I assured her, in a few words, that Henry's temper was such, that I was confident he would be easily prevailed upon to consent to every thing that was reasonable.

---

* This marriage was proposed about 1588, or 1589, and from a letter of Henry to his mistress Corisande d'Andouin, seems to have been ardently desired by the king of Scotland: "There is a man here," says the king, "who is the bearer of letters from the king of Scotland to my sister; he presses me more than ever about the marriage: he offers to send me a supply of six thousand men, and to come himself to serve me," &c. See more on this subject in the Appendix. Edit.

The princess, surprised at so precipitate a conclusion, asked me, with some appearance indeed of reason, if I had nothing more to say to her; for it must be confessed, that I had gone a great way about to little purpose: I replied, that I had still a great many things to add. This long conversation having lasted till night, I depended upon having wearied the princess so much, that she would take an absolute leave of me: but I was mistaken; she said she would see me the next day, and dismissed me with a sullen and malignant look, accompanied with a glance, and some interjections, which I heard as I went out, upon the part I had played at Chartres; from whence I drew a very unfavourable presage.

I should have been the most presumptuous of all men, if, after this, I could have flattered myself with being able to bring her to the point we desired. Indeed I was so far from entertaining such a thought, that I should have been rejoiced, if the princess, in quitting me, had commanded me never to appear before her again. I went however the next day to wait upon her at the appointed hour, which was after she had dined. She had retired to her cabinet earlier than usual, and continued shut up there with the ladies de Rohan, de La-Guiche, de La-Barre, and de Neufvy, from none of whom I had the least reason to expect any good offices. I waited in her chamber, talking to the ladies de Gratains and Pangeas, and two other young ladies, who were as much inclined to favour me as the others to do the contrary. I told them, that I should not have been sorry, if they had been in the princess's cabinet instead of those ladies that were then with her, who, I was persuaded, were that very moment giving her very bad advice. They told me I ought not to imagine so, but in a tone that confirmed me in my opinion.

It was an hour at least, before the princess came out; she had been all this time preparing herself, and, perceiving me, told me that she was going to give me her answer; the purport of which it was not difficult to guess, by the cold yet contemptuous air with which she pronounced these words. I followed her, in great uneasiness; but she spared me the pain of speaking first, by telling me that she acquitted me of all I had promised to inform her of, and that now I had nothing to do but to hear her in my turn: then assuming an air still more haughty and contemptuous, she treated me in the presence of all those witnesses (I am obliged to confess it) like the basest of men, who, she said, took upon myself the character of a person of importance, and an able politician, while, in reality, I was a vile and infamous parasite, who had endeavoured to extort from her own mouth a confession of faults, which neither she nor the count had ever been guilty of, in order to make my court to the king, who was himself ashamed of the part I had acted. The princess could not here avoid falling into the female fault of betraying, by an exuberance of words, the reserve she had resolved to maintain. Something which I had said the evening before, relating to her conduct and that of the count of Soissons in Bearn, occurring to her memory, she entered into an unseasonable justification of it. Pangeas* was called a great loggerhead, who had not yet received his deserts; my comment upon the duties of kings was considered highly unbecoming: then recalling herself from this rambling strain, she told me, that, to conclude all with a few words, and to hinder me from boasting of my commission, she gave me to understand, that I was rash and imprudent to the last degree, to concern myself with the affairs of a person so far above me; I, who was only a private gentleman, whose highest honour it had been to be brought up in her family, and who, as well as all my relations, had subsisted only upon the bounty of the princes of Navarre; that the fate of all those who, like me, forgot themselves, and dared presume to interfere in matters which did not concern them, was to be sacrificed sooner or later, without having the honour of the action. From a woman these expressions might be endured, but, as the princess was well assured that no man whatever, not even the count of Soissons, although a prince of the blood, durst treat me in the same manner, she added, as the highest affront she could think of, that all she had said was in the count's name as well as her own. The conclusion of this speech was of a piece with all the rest; she threatened, with an excess of rage, to ruin me for ever with the king, by a single word, and forbad me, for the future, to appear in any place where she was.

---

* See vol. I. p. 303.

I do not believe any distinction of rank or sex can authorise the use of terms so outrageous: certainly it cannot be vanity in me to repeat them; but, as the princess added endeavours to words, and obliged me to take measures for my own defence, in which, for the first time, I waived that submission I owed to a princess, the sister of my king, I cannot better prove the necessity I was under to take such steps, than by faithfully relating those conversations, and even the very words that were made use of. Although my pride suffered greatly by this shameful treatment, I had discretion and even policy enough, not to suffer it to appear; I say policy, for had my countenance expressed the least emotion, or my reply the least bitterness, the princess, without hearing me, would have left me in a triumph which it was necessary I should lessen before those persons who either took part in, or were witnesses of it.

I began, therefore, with the false timidity of a man who is solicitous to disculpate himself; and that I might engage the princess to hear all I had to say, I told her that I was very much grieved, to find that the prejudices she had conceived made her discover a meaning in my words that I had no intention to give them, and had drawn upon me a treatment I could not possibly deserve; that it was easy for me to convince her how little I merited those reproaches she had cast upon me; and to begin with the count of Soissons, she knew that in all I had said relating to him, I had added, that, for my own part, I was absolutely convinced of the rectitude of his intentions. By this introduction, I stopped the princess, who supposed she should soon have the pleasure to see me imploring pardon at her feet.

I went on, with the same composure, to tell her, that, to remove the displeasure she seemed to entertain, that a private gentleman, and one unworthy to approach her, should be sent to treat with her, I begged leave to remind her that although, by the prodigality of my ancestors, I was neither possessed of the estate nor dignities to which I had a claim, yet, more than an hundred thousand crowns had been carried by the daughters of my family into the houses of Bourbon and Austria;* and that, far from being a charge to the king since I had been in his service, his majesty had sometimes given me the pleasure to see him have recourse to me in his necessities. I acknowledged, however, that nothing could have justified my having exceeded his orders, if I had really been capable of doing so. Here, drawing the king's second paper out of my pocked, addressed to the princess, in form of a letter, I took advantage of the astonishment into which I had cast her, to tell her, that to finish my message before I quitted her for ever, I declared to her, as his servant, that his majesty holding the place of her father, and being likewise her master and her king, she had no other part to take than submission to his will; that, without listening to any thing the count of Soissons could suggest, she must resolve either to accept of a husband from the hand of the king her brother, or incur the loss of his favour; that in this last case, it would be a very sensible mortification to her, after having held the rank of a queen, to see herself reduced to a very inconsiderable fortune, since she was not ignorant, that, besides the presents the king had bestowed, in the resignation he made her of those estates she at present enjoyed, he had consulted rather the dictates of his own heart than the laws and customs of Navarre, which would have assigned a very small provision for her.

---

* I refer the reader to the explanation I have given in the beginning of these Memoirs, about the alliances of the house of Bethune.

These last words drew the princess, in spite of herself, out of that scornful insensibility she had affected to shew, to enter into the greatest transport of rage that any woman could be capable of. After giving vent to all that anger could inspire, she went furiously into her cabinet; and I withdrew, with great composure, towards the staircase, whither madam de Neufvy came running after me, to tell me, that the princess had sent her to demand the letter I had shewn her. This was a new stratagem of those four ladies, who had persuaded the princess, that she would ruin me more effectually with the king, if she could make it appear that I had sacrificed his majesty's letter. I perceived the snare that was laid for me, and I replied to madam de Neufvy, that I was surprised the princess, after having refused to hear the contents of the letter, should send immediately to demand it. I added, that I could communicate it only to the princess, and that by simply reading it to her, having occasion for it myself. This was not what the messenger wanted, and she returned without making me any answer.

I went that evening to Moret, where my wife then was, and staying with her only one day, set out the next for Paris, to meet my courier, whom I had sent from Fontainebleau with dispatches to the king. But I was greatly surprised when, instead of him, I saw young Boësse, the princess's steward of the household, arrive with a letter, and still more so, when I found it was from the king. I knew that Boësse was the person whom the princess sent with her dispatches to his majesty. I found that this letter had been sent open to the princess, and had not been transmitted to me till it had passed through her hands, and that she had sealed it with her own seal: all these circumstances left me no room to doubt of my misfortune, which, by a sad foreboding in my mind, was still more confirmed, and I opened the letter trembling. My fears were but too just; the letter was in the following terms:

" Monsieur du Rosny, I am much concerned, and " greatly astonished, at not having received any " letters from you since your departure, to inform " me of what you have done in the business with " which I charged you respecting my sister, and " more particularly so from having received letters " from her, in which she complains bitterly against " you, by whom, she says, she has been so much "offended, and in so many respects, that she can "never forgive you, and therefore intreats me to "obtain her satisfaction from you; though I must "confess that she specifies nothing particularly in "her letter, which makes me think there is not perhaps so much to complain about as she would have "me believe: however, she says generally, that you "have made use of more insolent expressions than "I could have done; you are sensible such conduct "is not consistent with your duty, my wishes, or "the instructions I delivered to you on your departure, with regard to the manner in which you "were to act towards my sister, whom you were "to address in the same manner as you would myself, to assure her of my good-will, point out to "her in the gentlest manner, her duty in certain "things, the obligations she owes me, the favours I "wish to confer upon her if she will act according "to my desires, and what my intentions are in all "these respects: think, therefore, on what you "have said and done, and if there be the least circumstance that can have justly given her displeasure, return to her, apologise candidly, nay even "entreat her forgiveness, if the thing require it, "which she will immediately grant you; you will "not be ill received, for I have taken care of that: "but however this may be, make her satisfaction, "for considering how nearly she is allied to me, I "will not suffer any of my subjects to offend her "with impunity, if he refuse to make those submissions which are due to her. I pray God, monsieur Rosny, to preserve you. From Amiens this "15th of May, 1596."

I was overwhelmed, I confess, with this unexpected blow, and so much the more, as, having no reason to imagine that the king had not received my letter, I saw that it was after he had read it that I was thus treated. What reflections did I not then make upon the misfortune of being employed in settling the differences of persons of such rank, and the danger of serving kings! I had nothing to reproach myself with in regard to Henry; I had served him four and twenty years with an unwearied assiduity, and a zeal that nothing could allay; it was with reluctance that I accepted this last disagreeable commission: the writing which I had obtained of the king contained many things much more severe than any I had said to the princess; and I had suppressed them at a time when it would, perhaps, have been excusable to have aggravated them. My guilt was, at most, a too faithful obedience; yet his majesty sacrificed me cruelly, without any regard to my reasons, or his own express commands. I was sensibly affected with this injustice, and all my thoughts ran upon forming strong resolutions to quit the court for ever.

But scarce had I taken these resolutions when a thousand motives concurred to make me change them. Henry, as I had already often proved, had acquired such an empire over my will, that after repeated oaths on my side to quit him, a single word from him has drawn me to him as it were by enchantment. To this was added the consideration of my own interest: by listening to my resentment, I was exposing myself to lose the rewards of my long services, when I was just upon the point of obtaining them, and at a time when, being disinherited by the viscount de Gand, I lost an estate of fifty thousand livres a year; exhausted by a long and painful service, having a house to establish, and menaced with a numerous family by the fertility of my wife, these expected rewards were all my resource, and the only foundation I had to build upon. But, on the other side, how could I endure to suffer, like a criminal, the haughty and contemptuous behaviour of a princess, with whom I had just before maintained a character so different, and who would make this cup as bitter for me as she was able? The agitation and grief of my mind may be easily imagined.

I at length took the most prudent part I could, but it was far from suspending the uneasiness that preyed upon my spirits; I feigned sickness, and the deep melancholy with which I was seized was in reality capable of communicating to my body part of the disorder of my mind. I discovered to no person whatever the cause of my grief, but sent for a physician, who making me tremble for the consequences of a disease entirely of my own framing, promised, however, to restore me to health by the force of bleeding and purges.

At four o'clock in the afternoon another physician arrived, for whom the cure of my distemper was reserved; this was Picaut, my courier, whom I had waited for impatiently, in order to form, upon the accounts he should bring me, my last resolutions. After informing me that he had had the misfortune to sprain his ankle, which was the cause that the princess's courier came to the king before him, he presented me with a letter, in this prince's own hand-writing, which removed all my complaints: it was as follows:

"My friend, this letter will, I doubt not, find "you in anger at the style of my preceding one, "which Boësse will have delivered to you, and "which I only wrote through his importunities, to "get rid of those of my sister, and to appease in "some degree the first effusions of her rage: you "know as well as I, that we are both easily moved

" to anger, but we are soon appeased; pay no attention, therefore, to my first letter, and read only " this, by which I again confirm the assurances I " gave you at your departure. I well know you " would do nothing contrary to my intentions, and " I also am convinced you would not depart from " the tenour of that letter which serves you as a " warrant, and which I suspected you required for " that purpose when you set out. Be therefore under " no apprehension that I will disavow what you have " done, or suffer you to meet with any affront. Serve " me always as you know I wish to be served; love " me as I wish to love you. Come to me as speedily " as you can, and inform me more circumstantially " of all that has taken place during your mission, " and be assured you will be as well received by me, " as ever you were (though I should be obliged to " use the old motto of the house of Bourbon, *Let* " *who will grumble at it)*. Adieu, my friend. From " Amiens this 16th of May, 1596."

In this kind familiarity I again knew my old master. I set out for Amiens very early in the morning, and arrived there the next day. I neither suppressed nor palliated any part of what had been said or done at Fontainebleau between the princess and me; and his majesty, by repeated expressions of friendship and esteem for me, shewed that he approved of my whole conduct.

That I may not too often interrupt the course of my history by a recital which is equally proper every where, I shall finish, in a few words, all that relates to this affair. La Varenne, who was employed by the princess to take care of her interests at the court, did not fail to inform her of the good reception the king gave me, and the report that was every where spread, that the finances would be wholly confided to my care. The princess comprehended, by this news, that it was now necessary not only to renounce her vengeance, but also to be upon good terms, for the future, with a man from whose hands henceforwards all the appointments for the support of her household would proceed. Whether she was convinced that she herself was wrong, or still imputed the blame to me, she had the generosity to pardon me: and I must confess, to the honour of the princess, that in this she shewed a greatness of soul of which few persons could have been capable. If in those qualities which marked the character of Catherine we except an excess of vivacity which it was not in her power to restrain, and to which, in the affair above mentioned, was added the force of the most impetuous of all passions, her disposition will be found naturally good and easy, capable even of the refinements of friendship, and the warmth of gratitude.

She communicated this alteration of her sentiments with regard to me to madam de Pangeas, one of my friends; and even made the first advances to madam de Rosny, whom I had left in childbed at Moret. When her health was perfectly re-established, she went one day to chapel at Fontainebleau, and returned without waiting upon the princess, under pretence of a slight indisposition which confined the latter to her bed. Madam de Pangeas making her some reproaches, as if from herself, but in reality by the princess's orders, my wife found herself obliged to tell her, that the terms I was upon with the princess made it impossible for her to do herself that honour. On a second journey which madam de Rosny made to Fontainebleau, the princess sent to inform her, that the reasons she had given madam de Pangeas ought not to prevent her from coming to see her. Accordingly, my wife waited upon her, and was most graciously received. She candidly confessed, that she was not yet entirely satisfied with my conduct, as she thought she had reason to expect a very different one, considering those instances of friendship which I had received from her in my youth: she then mentioned several parties of pleasure at Pau, or at M. de Miossens',* in which she had done me the honour to take me with her, and in particular a running at the ring, where, having gained the prize, which was a ring of trifling value, and when about to receive it from her hand, she changed it, and gave me one in its stead worth two thousand crowns. She did not forget to mention, that my father had often carried the queen, her mother, in his arms. After all this, the princess very obligingly told my wife, that her resentment against me had never extended to her, whose character and disposition she loved. She said a thousand obliging things of M. de Saint-Martin, my wife's uncle, who had been first gentleman of the bedchamber to the king, and of madam de Saint-Martin, the sister of M. de Miossens, and consequently a near relation of the princess.

Madam de Rosny left her extremely well satisfied, and fully determined to use her utmost endeavours to restore me to her favour. She made no attempts this first visit; but afterwards, observing to the princess the attention I shewed in settling the assignments for the payment of the officers of her household; and representing to her, that it was only by repeated orders from his majesty that I subdued the reluctance I had to accept of the commission which had so much offended her, madam de la Force, who was then at the princess's toilet, joined my wife; and, what surprised me greatly, being supported by the ladies de Rohan and de la Barre, they prevailed upon her to send for me that moment. From this time, when the princess was convinced of my innocence, she had so great a degree of friendship for me as to confide all her secrets to me alone: she proposed and promoted with all her interest the marriage of my eldest daughter with the duke of Rohan, her nearest relation* on the side of the deceased queen her mother, and the heir of her estate in Navarre; a match which the king did not then approve of, though he did afterwards. And lastly, when this princess set out for Lorrain, sufficiently discontented, as it is well known, with the court of France, she declared publicly, that there were only three persons in it whom she esteemed, and that I was one of them.

---

* Henry d'Albret, baron de Miossens.

II. Hostilities between the king's party and that of the league continued, during the years 1595 and 1596, in the same parts of the kingdom as in the preceding years; in Brittany, between messieurs d'Aumont and de Saint-Luc, and the duke of Mercœur: and in the provinces in the south of France, where several little skirmishes happened between messieurs de Ventadour, de la Rochefoucault, de Châteauneuf, de Saint-Angel, de Lostange, de Chambaret, and other officers on the king's side;† and messieurs de Pompadour, de Rastignac, de Saint Chamant, de Montpezat, de La-Chapelle Biron, and other leaguers. The defeat of the Crocans, the siege of Blaye, the sacking of Agen, and the death of the duke of Rochefoucault, are the most remarkable events * that happened in the Limosin and the adjacent places. Lesdiguieres continued the war with equal success in Dauphiné, Provence, and Piedmont: sometimes against the duke of Savoy, and sometimes against the duke of Epernon. The conclusion of all these expeditions was the entire defeat of the duke of Savoy, who, thinking to derive some

---

* Henry II. of that name, duke de Rohan, &c. who married Margaret de Bethune, as will be seen in the sequel of these memoirs, was grandson to René I. of that name, viscount de Rohan, and Isabella d'Albret, daughter to John King of Navarre. See in all the genealogists the other alliances of this illustrious house with that of France.

† Anne de Levis, duke de Ventadour, governor of Limosin, and lieutenant-general for the king in Languedoc: he died in 1622.—Francis de la Rochefoucault, prince of Marsillac.—René de Saint-Marthe, sieur de Chateauneuf.—Charles de Rochefort de Saint-Angel.—Lewis Francis de Lostange, or Loustange.—N. de

---

Chamberet, otherwise called Chambert, governor of Limosin.—Lewis viscount Pompadour. —— de Rastignac.—John de Saint-Chamant, or Antony his brother. They were all afterwards of the king's party.—Henry Des-pres de Montpezat. ——— de Charbonniere, sieur de La-Chapelle Biron.

* Most of the events which the author mentions here, happened before the year 1595. The count de Rochefoucault had been dead since the year 1591, having been killed, as was said before, at the battle of Saint-Yrier-la-perche. The viscount de Pompadour was likewise dead in 1591. The taking of Agen by the count de la Roche, son to marshal de Matignon, was likewise in the same year 1591. Blaye was besieged in the year 1593, by the same marshal, who, notwithstanding the defeat of a Spanish squadron, was obliged to raise the siege. The Crocans, so called from Croc, a village in the Limosin, where they began to assemble themselves, were also defeated about the same time by Chambert, or Chambaret, the governor of that province: and afterwards, the marshal de Matignon completed their final dispersion and overthrow in Languedoc, more by stratagem than by open force. Consult, as to all these events, the historians above quoted; as also see, in the private history of the constable de Lesdiguieres, the expeditions of this hero, famous for the victories at Epernon, Pontcharra, Vinon, &c. and for the taking of the fort d'Exiles, of Cahors, and of a great number of other places; whereby he became master of all Savoy, and a part of Piedmont.

Besides a war, France was sore afflicted this year, 1596, with a plague and famine, which were occasioned by the utter inversion of the seasons: for l'Etoile says, that there was a summer in April, an autumn in May, and a winter in June.

advantages from the disunion of the dukes of Guise and Epernon, had marched as far as Provence, from whence he was shamefully driven back; and likewise that of the duke of Epernon, who yielding to his rival the duke of Guise, assisted by the same Lesdiguieres, d'Ornano and the countess of Sault's party, was left without any resource, and reduced to the necessity of imploring the king's clemency, by letters conceived in terms of the utmost submission, which his majesty received at Gaillon. His letters were very soon after followed by himself; he came and threw himself at the king's feet, which was a kind of triumph for Henry, this duke's humiliation, with that of Bouillon, and de la Tremouille, being amongst the number of those things he most earnestly desired.

During his stay at Amiens, the king took several new measures to facilitate my being joined in the council of the finances. This prince, who by an effect of the native rectitude of his own mind, could not believe it possible for men to be as corrupt as they really were; and by the sweetness of his disposition incapable of proceeding to extremities till he had tried all other methods, had for a long time imagined, that he should at length bring this body to manage the revenues of the state with wisdom and economy; and that this important reformation was not so difficult, but that it might be produced by the advice of one man of industry and integrity, whom he would associate with those that composed it. With this view, he spoke both in public and private to the members of the council to receive me amongst them: however great their reluctance was, they durst not openly reject a proposition which, being made in this manner, resembled rather an intreaty than a command.

I confess sincerely, that I was not so easily brought to yield to this medium. His majesty, in a private conversation, told me it was his desire I should endeavour to gain the good-will of the council, and by some instances of complaisance, remove the suspicions they had entertained, that if I joined their society it would be only to do them ill offices; so that I might engage them by my behaviour to make it their own request that I should be associated with them. I did not hesitate a moment in replying, that it appeared to me to be the worst way imaginable of being introduced into the council of the finances, to owe it as an obligation to those who governed them: and that knowing as I did the dispositions of this body, I could not serve them and the state at the same time. The king, who did not like to be contradicted, and who likewise remembered my disputes with the duke of Nevers, supposed I had still some remains of resentment against those gentlemen, and thought he perceived a kind of haughtiness in my answer, and a tenaciousness of my own opinion. He told me, with some quickness, that he had no desire to irritate every one upon my account; therefore, without making any more attempts to bring me into the finances, he would seek for some other employment for me, since he knew I could not continue in a state of inactivity.

He had still some remains of displeasure in his countenance when he quitted me to visit madam de Liancourt, who enquiring the cause, represented to him, that he would never be served with fidelity till he found a man who, from a regard only to the public good, would not fear to draw upon himself the hatred of the financiers. As for me, I looked upon my engaging in the finances as farther off than ever; and reflecting that my employment would in future be reduced to treaties and negociations, an office which seldom fails to bring certain ruin upon any man who would maintain his rank in it with dignity, and his reputation with honour, I resolved to explain myself to his majesty, and prevail upon him to approve of a scheme that would at least secure to me the reimbursement of all my expenses. But Henry did not give me time to make this proposal to him: as soon as I approached he told me, that upon the representation madam de Liancourt had made him, he was now brought over to my opinion, and that, without any longer delay, he was going to declare his intentions publicly, after having, for form's sake, imparted them first to the constable and Villeroi, to whom it belonged to dispatch my patents. These two gentlemen came very seasonably into the king's apartment, and received this order, the constable by a low bow, and Villeroi by saying, he would give me the patents as soon as he could meet with a precedent of the proper form.

In the afternoon, when the king was gone to hunt, I went to make my acknowledgments to the marchioness de Monçeaux (for this was the title that madam de Liancourt had lately taken); after which I thought I was obliged, in civility, to visit monsieur de Villeroi, of whom, instead of the patents, I asked for a warrant, which would have answered the same purpose. Villeroi made an evasive reply, and during three or four days that I pressed him, he always deferred the affair on various pretences till the next day. At last, the king left Amiens to go to Monçeaux, and passed by Liancourt, where Liancourt, his first equerry, received and entertained him very splendidly. It was in this place that the council had determined to use their utmost efforts against me.

Liancourt, at Villeroi's solicitation, invited the chancellor, who was his intimate friend, and the other members of the council, who came to that place by the king's order, to stay at his house during the king's residence there. They took advantage of this opportunity, of being always near the king, to labour effectually for my exclusion from the council. The method they made use of was not to attack me directly, but to hint to the king, that I was not fit for this employment, in which, they said, for want of that experience which only a long habitude can give, it would not be possible to avoid committing a thousand faults, the least of which was capable of ruining for ever the credit, and consequently bringing on the destruction of the state. These discourses were so often repeated, in the king's presence (for they designedly turned the conversation upon that subject), and with so great an appearance of sincerity, that he was at last shaken by them, and when at the same time he found these gentlemen could with such facility form the greatest projects, discourse with such clearness upon the strength and interests of the state, calculate the revenues of it with the utmost exactness, in a word, were possessed, in appearance, of the whole science of commerce in its full extent, and of every other method by which a state is rendered flourishing; and especially that they conversed with each other in a language hardly intelligible to any but themselves; and, influenced still more by the long preparation which they represented as absolutely necessary before any one could be received into the council, the king fell again into his former irresolution, and thought that the present evil was not the greatest misfortune with which the finances might be threatened. His majesty likewise, looking upon all this as a proof of their repentance, and, from the apprehensions he had just given them expecting to see a very great alteration in their conduct, no longer entertained a design of introducing me amongst them.

Villeroi, who during this time continued at Amiens, though he was not the less informed of all the measures taken by a body whom he directed as he pleased, seized this opportunity to send my patents to the king, which he could not dispense with himself from dispatching, after the express orders he had received from his majesty. When they were transmitted to the king, he had left Liancourt, having staid there only a day, and was then at Monçeaux, where, still under the influence of those suggestions he had just heard, he gave them to Beringhen, telling him to keep them without saying any thing to me, till he had orders to the contrary. Beringhen, who was one of my friends, discovered the secret to me, which I kept faithfully. Fifteen days passed in this manner. The king did not speak to Beringhen about my patents, and the council, blinded by their success, instead of that sincere repentance which his majesty expected from them, gave him new proofs of their artifice and insincerity, and such gross ones, that they forced him to crush them with the blow which they might, without much difficulty, have avoided.

The king discovered that the council had just farmed out the subsidies of Normandy for thirty thousand crowns, and to defraud the treasury of this sum, so much less than the true value of the revenues, they had applied it all to the discharging the old demands upon it. With a little attention, he convinced himself of other faults in their conduct; that the five large farms did not produce the fourth part of their value, because Zamet, Gondy, and other farmers of the king's revenues, who were employed in them, being connived at by the gentlemen of the council, divided with them the immense profits that accrued from those farms. The avarice of these people was not yet sated, and, under pretence of the losses at Calais, Cambray, Ardres, &c. they allowed such drawbacks upon all the other parts of the king's revenues, that, instead of increasing, they grew perceptibly less. The king, amidst that just indignation which this knowledge inspired, sent for me, and commanded me to go to Paris, to enquire from whence so great a dissipation of the money proceeded, which could only take its rise from the council. I replied, that his majesty having, without doubt, revoked the order he had given to Villeroi, to dispatch my patents, since I had not received them, I had no right to mix with the council, or to meddle with the affairs transacted by it. "How!" said Henry, concealing his consciousness of this reproach, "did not Beringhen "fifteen days ago, deliver you your patents, and "a letter from Villeroi? you will find this heavy "German has forgot them." While, by the king's orders, I went to make preparations for my journey, that I might reach Claye that evening, his majesty spoke to Beringhen, who consented to take all the blame upon himself. During this interval, an idea came into my head, which I communicated to the king when I returned to receive his last orders. I told him, that I thought it would be necessary for me to go, before the day appointed for the opening of the states, to some of the principal districts of the kingdom, to procure there a more certain account of the present state of his majesty's revenues, the diminution they had suffered, and the augmentation they would admit of, to the end that his majesty might regulate his demands upon the states according to this scheme, which, however imperfect, might still, in proportion, throw some light upon the strength of the more distant districts, and consequently upon the whole kingdom: that, besides this advantage, I did not despair of procuring for him, in those districts only which I should visit, the three or four hundred thousand crowns which he had demanded in vain of the council. I thought it would be useless, and even imprudent, to take upon myself to make this examination, without such an instrument as appeared to me to be the most effectual means to prevent my being deceived, which was a full power from the king to suspend the contumacious receivers and overseers from the exercise of their office, or even to discard them entirely, and to reward the integrity of those who had been zealous for his majesty's service.

Henry approved of the essential part of this scheme, but altered something of the manner in which it was to be proposed to the council. He was of opinion that I should take such measures in offering this advice to them, that those who most valued themselves upon the strength of their genius, such as Sancy, Schomberg, Fresne, and La Grange-le-roi, might seize the hint first themselves, and so pass, at least in part, for the authors of it; and likewise, that each one in the company might flatter himself that this commission would be given to him, or, through his means, to the intendants and masters of requests who were wholly at his devotion. Nothing could be more prudent than this medium, which gratified alike the vanity of some, and the avarice of all. Accordingly I took my place in the council, where, by a miracle, to be found only in courts, my colleagues, who inwardly pined with vexation, suffered nothing but joy to appear in their countenances, words, and behaviour. I was almost deceived myself by the profusion of praises with which the chancellor loaded me, and the manner in which he told me I had been expected by them with the utmost impatience: such is the art of courtiers; they settle it amongst themselves, that however grossly they play the counterfeit, they shall not appear laughable to each other.

III. The treaty with the duke of Maïenne, which had been agreed upon some time before, was concluded during the king's stay at Monçeaux. When the king was at Amiens, the duke had sent a man to him, named d'Estienne, to know what place would be agreeable to his majesty, for him to come and pay him his respects, and the king appointed Monçeaux, in consideration of the duke's indisposition, which would not permit him to make longer journies than from Amiens to Soissons, where he resided.* The king was walking in his park, attended only by me, and holding my hand, when the duke of Maïenne arrived, who put one knee to the ground, with the lowest submissions, and added to a promise of inviolable fidelity his acknowledgments to his majesty for having delivered him, he said, from the arrogance of the Spaniards, and the subtilty of the Italians. Henry, who, as soon as he saw him approach, had advanced to meet him, embraced him thrice, and, forcing him to rise, embraced him again with that goodness which he never witheld from a subject that returned to his duty; then taking his hand he made him walk with him in his park, conversing with him familiarly upon the embellishments he designed to make in it. The king walked so fast, that the duke of Maïenne, equally incommoded by his sciatica, his fat, and the heat of the weather, suffered great torments without daring to complain. The king perceiving it, by the duke's being red, and in a violent perspiration, whispered me, "If I "walk longer, with this corpulent body, I shall revenge myself upon him, without any great difficulty, for all the mischiefs he has done us." Then turning to the duke of Maïenne, "Tell me truly, "cousin," pursued he, "do I not walk a little too "fast for you." The duke replied, that he was almost suffocated; and that if his majesty walked but a very little while longer, he would kill him without designing it. "Hold there, cousin," replied the king with a smile, embracing him again, and lightly tapping his shoulder, "for this is all the vengeance "you will ever receive from me." The duke of Maïenne, sensibly affected with this frank behaviour, attempted to kneel and kiss the hand his majesty held out to him, and protested that he would henceforwards serve him even against his own children. "I believe it," said Henry; "and that you "may love and serve me a long time, go to the castle "and rest and refresh yourself, for you have much "need of it. I will give you a couple of bottles of "Arbois wine, for I know you do not hate it: here "is Rosny, whom I resign to accompany you; he "shall do the honours of my house, and attend you "to your chamber; he is one of my oldest servants, "and one of those who is most rejoiced at your resolving to serve, and love me affectionately." The king continuing his walk, left me with the duke of Maïenne, whom I conducted to a summer-house to repose himself, and afterwards attended him on horseback to the castle, as much satisfied with the king and me, as we were both with him.

---

* L'Etoile tells the story otherwise: but in this the duke de Sully is more to be depended upon. Perefixe has likewise been mistaken in placing this interview in 1595. See Chron. Noven. liv. viii. p. 599. [Perefixe places the conclusion of the treaty only in 1595.]

The king thought Monçeaux so agreeable a place that he staid there longer than he had at first intended: he sent for the constable and Villeroi from Amiens, and ordered the council of the finances to reside at Meaux, for the conveniency of receiving his commands. I had not yet proposed in it my scheme of visiting the districts. His majesty, being convinced that it must be attended with good consequences, took upon himself the care of proposing it. At the first hint he gave of it, the councellors, who thought none but themselves could be designed for this employment, and each of whom was attentive to his own particular interest, without prejudicing that of the body in general, approved of the design; but were greatly surprised, when they found that, amongst them all, the king only named La-Grange-le-roi for this purpose, and appointed him two districts: his majesty filled up the other commissions with the names of messieurs de Caumartin * and Bizouze, for two districts each; and with those of the other two masters of requests, for one district each: four of the chief and most extensive ones were assigned to me. The gentlemen of the council began now to repent that they had not hindered the execution of a plan, which would produce a full proof of their injustice: they united

---

* Louis le Fevre, seigneur de Caumartin, was sent into the Lionnois, Berry, and Auvergne; we shall speak of him hereafter. He was keeper of the seals in 1622, after the death of M. de Vic, and died the following year, in the seventy-second year of his age. He had the same eulogiums given him by historians as M. Sully bestows on him in the sequel.

their utmost endeavours to render it useless, or at least to thwart it as much as possible. Their malice was all directed against me; for, by the confidence the king placed in me, and the part I had acted in this affair, they guessed the truth. I was accused of ignorance, rashness, and obstinacy, and other faults still more glaring; and had no sooner begun to exercise the duties of my employment, than I perceived that, by an effect of their foresight, they had taken all the necessary measures with the treasurers of France, the receivers-general and particular, comptrollers, clerks, and the lowest officers in the revenue. These people, almost all of whom had either sold, or blindly devoted themselves to their wills, were ready to do whatever was required of them; some absented themselves, and left their offices shut up; others presented me with a state of their accounts, drawn up with all that art which may be expected from men who make a science of roguery: others contented themselves with shewing me the orders of messieurs de Fresne, d'Incarville, and des Barreaux, by which they were forbid to communicate their registers and accounts to any person whatever.

To this excess of malice I at first opposed only patience and gentleness. I exhorted, I endeavoured to persuade, upon the principles of honour and justice, persons who were strangers to both: afterwards, I caused a report to be spread, that the design of assembling the states of the kingdom was to suppress that great number of offices and clerkships, especially the treasurers, the least useful of all the bodies, yet the most difficult to manage; and that none were to be continued in their places but those who made themselves worthy of that distinction, by a sincerity which, on this occasion, would prove their regard to the public good. This threat producing no effect upon persons who were secretly supported by the council itself, I was obliged to make use of the power I had received, and interdicted most of these dangerous officers, causing the duties of their employment to be exercised by two out of each body, whom I chose from among all those who appeared to have the best principles. By these means I made myself master of all the registers and accounts, which served me for a clue to enter this labyrinth of impositions and robberies.

What a scene had I here before me! It would be vain to attempt an account of the tricks and subtilties of this mischievous trade, or an enumeration of concealments, forgeries, misrepresentations, and productions of the same evidences, to serve different purposes; not to mention the contrivance of an artificial confusion, through which those wretches see with great clearness, though, to every other eye, all is darkness and inextricable perplexity. I content myself with remarking that, by clearing only two old accounts, and bringing together the receipts and letters of exchange of the year current, and the year preceding, I easily collected more than five hundred thousand crowns, which were lost to the king. It may be judged what a sum would have been raised, if, from all those who were thus employed, a rigorous restitution had been demanded of all that they fraudulently gained in so long a course of dishonesty, out of the different sums that had passed through their hands, since from assignments for old debts only, arrears of long standing, and orders payable to the bearer, so much money was recovered. My partners were not so fortunate or so exact as myself; all of them, except Caumartin, who brought the king two hundred thousand livres, paid his majesty only in long memorials of improvements to be made in the farming of his revenues; yet the king had chosen these persons with the greatest care. But it is not surprising that they should act in this manner; for to dare the hatred of a society so powerful as that of the financiers in France, to be proof against the presents and allurements, against the tricks and artifices of all their dependants, the greatest part of whom do not want understanding, and make use of it only to dazzle, corrupt, and deceive, requires a degree of courage and fortitude of which few persons are capable.

Meantime the gentlemen of the council, who had intelligence of all my proceedings in the provinces, were in a situation that may be easily imagined: unless they found means to render all my endeavours useless, or to ruin me before my return, their reputation and interest would be entirely lost. My absence afforded them all the conveniency they could wish for to prosecute this design; every thing that malice could suggest was said and done by them and their emissaries, to prejudice the king against me: they never mentioned me but as a tyrant, who drained the people of all their substance, by the most cruel extortions, without procuring any advantage to the king, since the sums with which I took such pains to fill his treasury, being designed for the payment of pensions to the princes of the blood, and salaries of the great officers of the crown, they would be only placed in his coffers to be taken out again immediately. Notwithstanding the invectives and impostures of this dreadful cabal, none of whose pratices against me I was unacquainted with, I continued to perform my duty, and they had no other effect than to increase my diligence in the execution of my plan, and my precaution in taking such measures as would effectually put a stop to their accusations.

Henry, who had at first given no credit to their reports, beginning afterwards to apprehend some bad consequences from my inexperience in those affairs, desired me, in his letters, to return as soon as possible: but, at length, when my enemies had made their party so strong, that there was a general outcry against me at court, the king was prevailed upon to believe that I should use the power I was possessed of with a severity that would make even him odious to the people; and then, instead of an invitation, I received an absolute order to return to Paris. I obeyed without murmuring, though greatly concerned to be thus stopped in the midst of my endeavours for his service. I caused the accounts of my four districts to be immediately drawn up, and signed by eight receivers-general; and not having time to convert the five hundred thousand crowns I had raised into a less bulky coin, I loaded seventy carts with them, making the eight receivers-general accompany them, under the guard of a provost and thirty of the marshalseamen, who conducted them to Rouen, where the king then was, on account of the opening of the states.

Of all the slanders which had been invented by the gentlemen of the council, to procure my disgrace, none seemed to them so specious as to make the king believe, that I had filled the prisons with the officers and clerks of his finances, to which they thought fit to add, that, through an insolent vanity, I had brought along fifty of the principal ones bound in my train. The king, who suspected no falsehood in so positive a charge, received me, when, on my arrival at Rouen, I went to pay my respects to him, with an air that convinced me my enemies had been very active in their endeavours to injure me. He did me the honour indeed to embrace me, but with a coldness and reserve which were not usual with him. He asked me why I had given myself the useless trouble of bringing money along with me, which I knew belonged to persons whom he had no inclination to disoblige? but he was greatly surprised to hear that not one denier of it was due to the princes of the blood, nor to any of the pensionaries of the state, who were all paid the April quarter, and would be likewise as exactly those of July and October, since I had not taken up any of the payments before hand. The king, after obliging me to repeat these words several times, and even to swear to the truth of them, broke into an exclamation against those wicked detractors, and impudent impostors, as he called them; "but," added he, "what do you intend to do with the receivers and "officers, whom you keep prisoners in your train?" The astonishment into which this question threw me, was alone sufficient to convince the king of the falsehood of this accusation; nor was it difficult for me to perceive that moment, that the malice of the members of the council would recoil on themselves; and that it would disclose more effectually the secret motives of their conduct than any thing I could say to him. His majesty required no other explanation from me; on the contrary, he loaded me with praises, and gave me a thousand proofs of his friendship and esteem.

Having been told that the sum I had raised must be very inconsiderable, upon his asking me what it was, I replied, that being unwilling to keep any part of it in my hands, either for my charges, expenses, or pension, that the receivers-general might find the full sum specified in the accounts, and learn from thence never to keep back any part of his revenues, his majesty might himself deduct my expenses from the five hundred thousand crowns which I had brought him. So considerable a sum gave great pleasure to the king, who was in extreme necessity for money: he told me, that he would take care my expenses should be all paid; and that, besides my pension of ten thousand livres a month, which he raised to eighteen, he would present me with the sum of six thousand crowns, as a reward for the service I had just done him. He commanded me to say nothing of what had passed between us, and sent me to lay apart from the money I had brought him a sum sufficient for the payment of six companies of Swiss, at the rate of eighteen hundred crowns a company, in order that this payment, which was urgently demanded, might be made on the following day.

I returned to my carriages, which stood in two courts belonging to the sieur de Martinbault, under the same guard that had conducted them to Rouen; I ordered them to be unloaded, and the small casks that contained the money to be placed in apartments, the locks of which were changed, and secured by large padlocks, with three keys to each; the two receivers had one each, and myself the third. The next morning I sent the Swiss officers the ten thousand crowns that were due to them, by three clerks, escorted by ten of the guard.

A short time after I had sent away this escort, Sancy, to whom the king had said, that he must pay the Swiss, and who was generally charged with this employment, sent me a note, in which he desired me to deliver to the sieur Le-Charron, the bearer, ninety thousand crowns for the payment of the Swiss. These were the terms in which the note was conceived; for this counsellor would have thought it a degradation of his high rank to have condescended to any politeness or explanation with his colleagues. I was equally offended at the formal style of this order, and the impudent demand of a sum that I knew to be three times more than was due; I therefore answered the bearer haughtily, that I neither knew Sancy, his writing, nor his orders. "How! do you "not know Sancy!" said Charron, surprised, no doubt, at my presumption, for at this name the whole council trembled, the rank Sancy held in it approaching very near to that of superintendant. Perceiving that I had no intention to send any other answer, he went back to report it with all the timidity of a servant who is apprehensive of awakening the ill humour of his master. Unfortunately for Sancy, he repeated my message before several persons, who were witnesses likewise of his rage. "We "shall soon see," said he, with an oath, "whe"ther he knows me or not." Then, after loading me with what invectives he thought fit, he went directly to Saint-Ouen to the king. "Well, Sancy," said his majesty to him, "have you been to pay our "Swiss?" "No, sire," he replied, with a sullen air, "I cannot go, for it does not please your monsieur "de Rosny that I should, who plays the emperor "in his apartment, sits upon his barrels of money "like an ape upon his block, and says he knows no "one; and I am not sure whether you will have "more credit with him than any one else." "How "is this!" replied the king, "I see you will never "be weary of doing this man bad offices, because I "confide in him, and he serves me diligently." His majesty added, that my refusal was so much the less probable, as I had, by his order, agreed to give this money to the Swiss. Sancy supported his assertion by the testimony of Le-Charron, whom he had brought along with him. The king, suspecting some new instance of malignity, ordered Biart, one of his grooms of the bedchamber, to go and fetch me.

As soon as he saw me, he asked me what had happened between Sancy and me. "I am going to tell you, sire," replied I boldly: and accordingly, without fearing the resentment of the terrible Sancy, I related all that had passed, in terms that sufficiently mortified his vanity. Sancy, who was not of a temper to yield, became more insolent than before, and assuming an imperious tone, an altercation so spirited ensued between us, although in the king's presence, that his majesty was obliged to command us to be silent. That instant, ceasing to speak to my adversary, I turned towards the king, and intreated him to give me no superior in affairs wherein I acted solely by his order. The gallery at Saint-Ouen, where this scene passed, was crowded with a great number of persons, who, being weary of Sancy's insolence, rejoiced to see him suffer this little disgrace. "It would have been very difficult," said some, as I was afterwards informed, "for "two such geniuses to have exercised the same "employments, without one of them being sup-"planted by the other; but in the disposition the "king is at present, the best economist will be "his choice." Others beheld my increase of favour with envy; and others, who probably had very little regard for either of us, laughed at the novelty of the sight, and cried, "There is one hot-headed man, "who has met with another that will not easily yield "to him."

The report of the great sums with which I had filled the king's coffers was no sooner spread, than I was overwhelmed with the demands of an infinite number of his creditors, most of whom were sent by the council, who, besides the desire they had to see this money speedily exhausted, had agreed with the creditors to have the usual drawbacks upon their debts. My principal view in raising this money being to make a fund for those military expeditions which the king was shortly to begin, without his being obliged to load the people with new imposts, I was resolved not to suffer it to be squandered away; and therefore resisted all their importunities, and continued unmoved by their insolence and threats. But reflecting afterwards, that there was an absolute necessity for sending home the eight receivers-general, who alone were acquainted with the uses to which I put this money, I was afraid of giving too much occasion for slander, by keeping so large a sum in my possession after their departure; and I resolved to send it to the royal treasury. The king, who thought his money was no where secure but in my hands, endeavoured several times to vanquish my scruples; but in vain: I was determined to prevent the least suspicion upon this occasion, and therefore confided it to the care of the two treasurers, Morfontaine and Gobelin. I removed his majesty's fears by promising him that I would watch so carefully how this money was laid out, that he should not suffer the least loss. I separated, in the presence of the receivers, those sums that were necessary for the payment of the army, the expense of a train of artillery of twenty pieces, with double equipages, a sufficient quantity of powder, besides a supply of other implements necessary for a siege, such as pickaxes, &c. which I caused to be carried to Amiens; I likewise laid aside fifty thousand crowns more for the king's privy purse, out of which he generally bestowed presents, unknown to the Catholics, on many old Protestant officers and soldiers who had served him faithfully in his wars. The remainder, which I calculated with the greatest exactness, amounted still to four hundred and fifty thousand crowns, and I carefully preserved both my former accounts and those relating to the sums that were taken from the total. But being desirous of having a second proof of what the gentlemen of the council and their receivers-general were capable of, I affected great negligence concerning the disposal of the money; and when the receivers came to me, before they set out for their offices, to request a copy of my accounts, I replied, that having no longer any concern about a sum that was now under the care of other persons, and they having been witnesses themselves of the uses to which the money had been applied, I had destroyed all those papers, as being now useless. This the receivers did not fail to inform their masters of.

A month had passed since the money was carried to the treasury, during which some payments were made out of it, which I likewise pretended to keep no account of: but here it was not possible to commit a mistake; for no sums being paid without a warrant from the council, which could not be suppressed, all that was necessary was, to keep an exact memorandum of it, which I did. These warrants amounted in a short time to fifty thousand crowns, and consequently there ought still to be four hundred thousand in the treasury. The king, however, some days after, demanding two hundred thousand crowns to be sent to Amiens, where the designed preparations were already making, particularly that for the taking of Hedin, Sancy and the rest replied, that they believed this sum might be still in the treasury, but nothing more; and sending for d'Incarville, who was likely to know best, having the care of the registers, he assured the king that there was hardly two hundred thousand crowns in his coffers. His majesty, whom I had, three days before, informed that there were still four hundred thousand crowns remaining, was extremely surprised; but their assertions were so positive that they forced his belief; and he told me that I must certainly be mistaken. I was so confident of the contrary, that I insisted, before d'Incarville himself, and all my colleagues, whom his majesty had sent for, that there was a mistake of one half of the money. D'Incarville replied, that his registers were more certain than my memory; and offered to bring, the next day, an extract of all the sums that had been paid out of the treasury. I perceived from whence so great a confidence proceeded, and I was resolved to suffer them, till the last moment, to flatter themselves that they were about to gain a complete victory over me. I had courage enough to conceal, even from the king, the stratagem I had made use of, and to endure, without reply, the reproaches he made me, for letting this sum go out of my hands, contrary to his desire.

The accounts were brought the next day, well attested, and no mistake was found in the sums which had been expended; that would have been too palpable: the whole mistake lay in the receipt, which was founded upon their full persuasion that I had really destroyed the papers which proved the quantity and quality of the coin carried at different times to the royal treasury. I secretly reflected with astonishment on the subtilty with which they had acted with regard to this receipt, so as to spread over it an obscurity impenetrable to any one who was not possessed of a full proof of its falsehood, and with what art they had given to this obscurity an air of truth, and even of conviction. I asked to see the receipts, with a feigned ill-humour, which seemed to these gentlemen a confession of my defeat. The council offered to make the receivers-general depose upon oath the numbers and contents of those carriages which had been sent to the royal treasury. I replied, that the discussion would be too tedious. D'Incarville, who took great pleasure at my dissembled perplexity, told me, that I might go and examine the registers of the finances upon the spot, since they could not be moved out of the offices. Although I easily comprehended that these registers, public and authorised as they were, might still be falsified like the rest, yet I could not imagine the manner in which it was done, the receipt for each of the carriages being signed by d'Arnaud and de l'Hôte, whose hand-writing I knew: I had therefore a curiosity to see these registers: all appeared very exact, and in the usual forms. The council then began to insult over me, and used their supposed advantages very ill.

I now thought it time to silence them, and to cover them in their turn with a real confusion. Accordingly, I produced the accounts, signed by the eight receivers-general; and likewise an exact memorandum of all the warrants. That instant all their arrogance vanished, and they would have been reduced to the necessity of confessing their roguery, had they not bethought themselves of a contrivance to avoid it; but so poor a one, as still left them all the disgrace. A clerk, instructed by d'Incarville, came to the king, and told him, that l'Hôte, who kept the key of the hall where the register lay, being one day absent when one of the most considerable of the carriages was brought to the treasury, and the receivers who conducted it being in haste to return, he thought it would be sufficient to mark the sum contained in the carriage upon a loose sheet of paper, intending that it should be afterwards revised, and signed by d'Incarville, and inserted in the registers; but that he himself going soon after to d'Heudicourt, it had escaped his memory, for which he entreated his majesty's pardon. The king contented himself with slightly reprimanding him for his neglect, ordering more care to be taken of the registers for the future; then turning towards the constable (who was at the end of the gallery where all this had passed, and who, in the whole affair, had appeared more favourable to the gentlemen of the council than to me), he cried out to him at a distance, in the presence of several persons, that his money was found, and that he knew in good time those in whom he ought to confide.

IV. Amidst these contentions came the day appointed for the opening of the states of the kingdom, or rather of the assembly of notables, that is, of persons of consideration; for so they were called. The reason of adopting this name,[*] instead of that of the

---

[†] Perefixe says, that it was because the king had not time to assemble the states in a body: "Kings (says d'Aubigné, with his usual "malevolence) have recourse to such sorts of assemblies, when "those of the states-general are tedious, difficult, or suspected by "them. The design of assembling these little states being to find "money to carry on the war against Spain, there were several "schemes proposed and agreed to; the pancarte, or old rate, was "the chief, which was but very ill received in many places of the "kingdom," &c. Tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 14. De Thou says very little of it, liv. cxvii. and Davila no more. All that is said in these Memoirs about this assembly is found, so far as I know, no where else: and in order to render it the more intelligible, I have taken the liberty which I requested in the preface to this work, to bring together all the ideas that the compilers of M. de Sully's manuscripts have made use of in their Memoirs, without any order or connexion. As we may well suppose that they were all mutually connected, and had each their proper object in the mind of this great statesman, it

states of the kingdom, which should naturally have been used, arose wholly from the lawyers and financiers, who perceiving that at this time they had riches and influence to give them such a superiority over the other classes, as they were unwilling any but the clergy should share with them, disdained to see themselves levelled with the people by one common denomination; which yet must have been the case, if the forms used in these assemblies, and particularly the distinction of the three orders, had been preserved. They, indeed, made their appearance with magnificence and splendor, which sunk the nobility, the soldiers, and other members of the state, below consideration, since they were not able to dazzle the eyes with splendid equipages, the glitter of gold, nor a long train of attendants, things which will always draw the envy, the reverence, and the worship, of the people; or, more, truly, will always shew our depravity and folly.

Such, in general, is the notion that ought to be formed of these great, these august assemblies; those men of whom one imagines, that they must come thither with minds full of wisdom and public spirit, warm with all the zeal that animated the ancient legislators, commonly think on no other business than how to make a ridiculous display of their pomp, and shew their effeminacy to most advantage; and whose appearance would sink them into infamy, if they were beheld without prejudice. To complete the picture, we must include the discord of the several bodies which compose these

---

entirely coincides with his views, to apply them to the subjects to which they naturally belong. And all that can be required is, I think, never to alter the substance of the thoughts in my original, which I have principally aimed at.

assemblies, their contrarieties of interest, their opposition of opinion, the desire of one to over-reach another, their intrigues, and their confusion; all which, together with that meanness discovered in the prostitution of eloquence, have their original from the same hateful cause: for by some fatality it comes to pass, that those improvements which an age makes in knowledge above preceding times, are not applied to the advancement of virtue, nor serve any other purpose than to refine wickedness. It is true, that in these assemblies there may be found a small number of men of great abilities and great virtues, men whose qualities no one disputes; but, instead of being forced into public notice, they are treated with an affectation of neglect and contempt, which sink them into silence, and with them suppress the voice of the public good. Thus long experience has shewn, that an assembly of these states rarely produces the good expected from it: for that such might be its effect, the members ought to be equally instructed in true and honest policy; at least ignorance and knavery should sit dumb in the presence of men of knowledge and integrity: but such is always the character of multitudes, that for one wise man, there are many fools, and presumption is the constant attendant of folly; and it is here more than in any place, that great virtues, instead of exciting respect and emulation, provoke hatred and envy.

Besides, if the prince who holds these assemblies be powerful, and fond of that power, he will easily defeat their schemes, or reduce them to silence; but if he be weak, and unacquainted with his own rights, an unbounded licentiousness of debate will soon sink the kingdom into all the miseries that naturally follow the depression of the royal authority.

Necessity therefore requires, that there should be, both in the sovereign and the subjects, a complete knowledge of their several rights, and mutual obligations. The first law of a sovereign is, that he should keep the law, for he has himself two sovereigns, God and the law: justice ought to preside on his throne, and gentleness to support it. God is the true owner of kingdoms, and monarchs are but the ministers, who ought to exhibit to the people a true copy of the perfections of him in whose place they stand; and remember, that they do not govern like him but when they govern as fathers. In hereditary monarchies, there is an hereditary mistake: the sovereign is master of the life and property of his subjects, and by means of these few words, *Such is our pleasure,* he is dispensed from giving the reasons of his conduct, and from having any reasons to give. Supposing this were really the right of a king, is it not the utmost degree of imprudence to incur voluntarily the hatred of those who must every moment have his life in their hands? And hated he must certainly be, who forces a concession of power, which he declares beforehand his intention to abuse.

With regard to subjects, the first law which religion, reason, and nature prescribe them, is to obey; their duty is to reverence, honour, and fear their princes, as representatives of the supreme Governor, who may be said to appear visibly on earth by these his ministers, as he appears in heaven by the orbs of light. These duties they are to pay from a principle of gratitude, for the security and advantages they enjoy under the shelter of the royal authority: for the calamity of having an unjust, ambitious, and arbitrary king, they have no other remedy but that of softening him by submission, and propitiating God by prayer. All grounds of resistance, however solid they may be thought, will appear, upon a careful examination, to be nothing more than artful and subtle pleas for disloyalty; nor has it been found that, by this practice, princes have been reformed, or taxes abolished; but to the calamities, which gave room for complaints, has been added a new degree of misery, as may be found by enquiring into the sentiments of the lower people, and particularly those of the provinces.

Such are the principles upon which the mutual happiness of governors and subjects might easily be fixed, if, in general assemblies of the nation, each party appeared fully convinced of the truth of these maxims: but, supposing this the case, there would still be less need of general assemblies, to which recourse is never had but when there is some disagreement between the members and the head. It may, however, be concluded, that, as these assemblies are at present useless, both on account of the occasions on which they are called, and of the methods in which they proceed, so they might be of great efficacy for the support of regularity and general virtue, if the prince, acting as the real head of united members, would call them with no other purpose, than to oblige those who lay down their employments, to give an account of their administration, in the face of the kingdom, and to choose with wisdom and discernment, those by whom their places should be supplied; animating them to a due discharge of their offices by his exhortations, and by a public distribution of praise and censure, punishments and rewards.*

---

* There cannot, I think, be any thing added to the justness of these sentiments. And we need only refer to them those who, like

Henry, while he waited for the meeting of the assembly, took a journey to Arques, Dieppe, and Caudebec, &c. to view once more the places where so many memorable actions had been performed: I accompanied him throughout his journey.

When the king returned to Rouen, he opened the assembly, by a speech, uttered with a dignity becoming a great prince, and a sincerity with which princes are unacquainted: he declared that, to avoid all appearance of violence or compulsion, he had determined not to call an assembly of deputies, named by the king, and blindly obsequious to all his inclinations, but that he gave admission at large to persons of all ranks and conditions, that men of knowledge and merit might have an opportunity to propose, without fear, whatever they thought necessary for the public good; that he would not at this time attempt to confine them to any limitations, but enjoined them not to make an ill use of this freedom from restriction, by any attempt to lessen the sovereign authority, which is the chief strength of the kingdom; and exhorted them to establish union amongst their members, to give ease to the people, to clear the royal treasury from debts, which, though it was subject to them, it never had contracted; to shew their justice in reducing exorbitant salaries, without lessening those that were necessary; and to settle, for times to come, a fund clear of incumbrances, and sufficient to maintain the army.

He added, that it should be no objection with him, that the measures proposed were not of his own contrivance, provided he found them dictated by justice, and public spirit: that they should not

---

Comines, Boulainvilliers, &c. have taken the side of the states, and the aristocratical party.

find him pleading his age, his experience, or personal qualities, as an exemption from any just regulations, though princes often made excuses far less defensible; but that he would shew, by his example, that it was no less the business of kings to enforce edicts, than of subjects to obey them.*

Henry rose after this speech, declaring that neither he nor his council would be present at their consultations, that they might be wholly freed from constraint; and accordingly retired with all his counsellors, leaving me only to lay before the assembly such accounts, memorials, and public papers, as were necessary for their information.

When I gave an account of the last assembly of these states at Paris, I spoke at large of their methods of proceeding, and the forms used in those great and numerous assemblies; and shall therefore only observe, at present, that, excepting the subject of their deliberations, this assembly resembled the former. As they were now necessarily to come to some conclusion, particularly with relation to the subsidies, and to settle the method of raising them, they could think of nothing better to be done, than to make a collection of old useless regulations of a nature contrary to the present state of affairs; instead of considering that the nation ought to be treated as a body afflicted with some new and extraordinary distemper, and therefore requiring an uncommon remedy, and that in proportion as its mechanism is better known, the operations performed upon it ought to be altered; such is the force of prejudice, that men continue obstinately to attempt the cure of their present disorders, by means of which the inefficacy is demonstrated by their inability to prevent the evils or to stop their progress. An injudicious reverence for antiquity, a false notion of causes, occasioned by the distance of time; a want of diligent reflection on the past, and of clear views of the future, about which our self-love hinders us from coming to any agreement, all contribute to perpetuate the wrong measures of ancient times. It is a maxim with some, that laws and customs are not to be changed; a maxim to which I zealousy adhere, except when the advantage, and, what is much stronger, the necessity, of the public* requires their alteration.

---

* "If I were desirous," says he, "to pass for an elaborate "orator, I would have introduced here more fine words than good "will; but my ambition aims at something higher than to speak "well: I aspire to the glorious titles of the deliverer and restorer "of France. I have not called you together, as my predecessors "have done, to oblige you blindly to approve of my will and plea"sure; I have caused you to be assembled, in order to receive "your counsels, to depend upon them, and to follow them; in "short, to put myself into your hands as my guardians: this is a "declaration which is not very common for kings, for gray hairs, "and conquerors like me to make; but the love which I bear my "subjects, and the extreme fondness which I have to preserve my "state, have made me find every thing easy and every thing "honourable." Peref. part 2.

---

* The genius of the French nation, it is said, is such, that this alone renders all change, even the most useful and necessary, extremely dangerous for us: a system, whose foundation, it seems, all the world, at this day, agrees was excellent, and which, notwithstanding this, has had very troublesome consequences, makes us insist more than ever upon this consideration. The duke de Sully, who lived at a time in which he did not want for proofs of the defects objected to the nation, would have answered to this, that two things are absolutely necessary in any nation whatever, in order to secure the success of such sort of enterprises: the first is an authority in the legislator, sufficiently great not to be obliged to change, or abate the least tittle of his plan through fear, policy, or compliance: the second, is a wisdom equally great, to prepare all the means for putting it in execution. Amidst a great number

Accordingly they amused themselves with raking old schemes out of the dust, and went on still enlarging the collection, which they found already to be of no value, till an impossibility came full in their view, and destroyed their project; for it appeared that these old constitutions were adapted to a form of government in which royalty, though decorated with a specious title, was a state of servitude; and could not therefore be applied to a period when the public interest had concentered, in a single person, the authority which was formerly distributed amongst a great many, and had established monarchy as the surest foundation of general security.

This fancy was followed by another, which engaged them for a time by some specious appearances, though, in effect, it was no less inconvenient than the former. This was the establishment of a new council, which they thought it proper to denominate the *council of reason*, whose members should be first named by the assembly, and afterwards by the sovereign courts. But there was already a council of this kind, and that very council had been apparently the cause of the disorders of the finances, and the misery of the nation. This signified nothing; the whole multitude suffered themselves to be so

of real changes that have been made in the different parts of the government, which will be seen in the sequel of these Memoirs, we may observe a still greater number of projects which have not been executed, though formed a great while ago: and what is the reason? why, because Henry the Great and his minister watched, and waited for, the proper conjunctures and circumstances, &c. which should render them certain and infallible. I will not scruple to say, that perfect skill consists not in imagining, but in knowing, the hazards that proceed from too great precipitation, and too great slowness, to be aware of the proper opportunity; and in short, to know how to conduct and how to prepare for it.

dazzled by a fine name, and a new election, that it was proposed, and determined, to make the evil itself its own remedy. It was settled, that the new council should divide into two portions the revenues of the king, which they estimated, without much examination, at thirty millions;* that they should keep one half in their own hands, for the discharge of arrears, pensions, wages of offices, and other public debts and engagements; and that out of the same sum they should repair or erect towns, buildings, roads, or other public works; and that of this sum neither the king nor the sovereign court should have power to take cognizance, or examine the application. It may easily be imagined, how the members of the council flattered their rapacity by an absolute and uncontrolable disposal of half the revenues of the state: let us for a moment suppose them dishonest in their management, what numbers must be distressed, what confusion and ruin must ensue?

The other part was left to the king, to be managed by him, or his ministers, with equal exemption from account: this was burthened with all the expenses of the artillery and fortifications, all foreign affairs, embassies, and negociations, the support of his household, his buildings, and his equipage, the payment of his officers, and his privy purse. Neither party was confined by any prescription, as to the manner of raising or managing either share of the revenue; provided they preserved that mutual independence on which the projectors valued themselves; as if the strength of the kingdom did not depend upon the power of assisting, according to their respective need, any part that should happen to be in distress, and supplying the sick, if I may use the expression, with the superfluous blood of those that are in health.

---

* The author is right in saying, that this computation is not exact, since, notwithstanding the augmentation of the king's revenues, and the clearing of his debts that happened under his ministry, and which may be seen in the sequel of these Memoirs to amount to a very considerable sum, cardinal Richelieu did not value the whole revenues of the state, after all the alterations which he himself had made, at more than thirty-five millions. Test. Pol. part 2. p. 152.

As the thirty millions at which the royal revenues have been rated, were suspected to be somewhat more than their real value, they resolved to create a new tax, by laying a penny in the shilling, upon all merchandises,* and provisions bought and sold in the kingdom, by wholesale or retail. When they computed the amount of the trade of particular persons, and the expenses of necessity, convenience, and luxury, they concluded that this new tax might safely be rated at five millions; and the happy notion was blest a thousand times, though in reality the scheme was no less chimerical than the new computation was defective.†

When the assembly had thus brought their scheme to perfection in all its branches, they sent it by their deputies to the king, who received the proposal in his council: the indignation raised by this project instantly appeared by such a confusion of outcries and murmurs, that the king had great difficulty to make the council give their votes separately. The field of discussion was boundless; every man was made eloquent by vexation and resentment. When my turn came, I contented myself with saying coldly, that I had nothing to add to such fine harangues. The king, who observed me attentively, and wondered at my reserve, resolved to have a private conversation with me before he gave the suffrage which was to determine for or against the scheme of the assembly; he therefore adjourned the consideration of the affair till the next day, in the presence of the same persons. When we were alone, he asked me with great eagerness the reason of my silence; and I made him the following observations.

---

* Corn was the only thing that was exempted.

† M. de Sully thinks and speaks of the establishing a *sous* or penny in the shilling, as almost every other person thought and spoke of it at that time. Le Grain is nevertheless favourable to this tax, liv. vi. Matthieu does not condemn it; and what is of greater weight, cardinal Richelieu finds it to be so much the more just as it is established, says he, in divers other states, and had been already resolved on by a body of the state, under Francis I. However the difficulties and inconveniencies which M. de Sully mentions in the sequel are real, and partly the same which made Richelieu be the first entirely to dissuade Lewis XIII. from establishing it. Test Pol. part 2. ch. 9. sect. 7.

It is certain that the assembly was so much infatuated with the new plan, that the king, by following the opinion of the council, who wished him to reject and annul it with contempt, risked the danger of giving birth to a discontent the more serious, as the states assembled acknowledged no superior who had any right to control them, not even the king. One of the most important maxims of a mornarchical government is, that the prince, ought, above all things, to be particularly careful never to reduce his subjects to the necessity of disobeying him either in word or deed. Moreover, the king would have acted directly contrary to the promise he had made to the assembly, that he would agree to their decisions. In short, had the king rejected it, all those who had conceived the project, and those who had adopted it, would have persisted the more obstinately in representing it as the true system of affairs, since they would not have been undeceived by its application; and they would in the end have asserted that it was the sovereign alone who had prevented the establishment in France of a system which had been so long and so ardently wished for. Every body knows, that it is the disposition of the people, especially of those who have spirit and resentment, to abuse the actions of their sovereign.

On the other hand, it was equally certain that this project was at once destructive in its tendency and impracticable in its execution; to give full conviction of this, the least knowledge of the finances was sufficient: besides the obstructions which I have just been mentioning, how many more must arise from the competitions which would be produced by any election of the members of the council, who were to be taken equally from all the provinces of the kingdom. No sooner would this scheme, which was now only sketched out, be branched into particulars, than that appearance of impartiality and justice, by which the conduct of public affairs must be necessarily thrown into the hands of new and unexperienced men, would occasion innumerable miscalculations, and mistakes. It was apparent that the heads of the new council would immediately grow giddy, and that all the measures they would take would add blunder upon blunder.

From the impossibility that any advantage could arise from this scheme, I drew my arguments to persuade the king to consent to it: by which means he would obtain, in the eyes of his people, the honour of falling readily into the measures which they themselves had marked out; and this condescension would be so far from lessening the royal authority, that when the new council had made the melancholy experiment of their strength, he would ultimately receive this advantage, that all the parts of the finances would fall back into his hands, with exemption from dependance. As the calculation of the royal revenues was made by the assembly, and the council selected from it, it was to be supposed that they had taken in all necessary considerations relating to those payments, of which the collection was most difficult and expensive: they could not therefore take it amiss, if the king chose his fifteen million out of that part which he liked best. Choosing for his share the revenue of the five great farms, *des parties casuelles, du domaine, et des aides,* he might expect, without presumption, to see them doubled, if not trebled, in a short time. This I spoke with full confidence, because I had already provided myself with responsible people, who had engaged to take these farms at a considerable advance. With respect to that which remained in the hands of the council of reason, the case was quite otherwise; and I would have been bound to the king, that the penny in the shilling, amongst others, would not, when all expenses were defrayed, bring in above two hundred thousand crowns clear money.

The reason why I did not give this opinion openly in the council, was, because I thought it proper that it should seem to come from the king himself. The king, after having heard me with great attention, was afraid lest my advice should bring him into difficulties, and into a mistake in some sort irretrievable; but having considered my reasons very seriously, he resolved to follow my opinion.

When the council met next day, they determined as the day before, and I determined in the same manner. The king declaring that he could not follow their advice, left them in the utmost astonishment, and went into the assembly, where he declared, in strong terms, that finding himself disposed to promote, with all his power, the inclinations of so wise a body, he received their scheme without any qualification or restriction, which he considered as consisting of three articles; the erection of an independent council, the division of the public revenues, and the levy of a penny in the shilling; that the assembly had nothing to do but in twenty-four hours to name the council; to give in a schedule of the thirty millions, that he might choose his own share; and that they should see, by his conduct, whether he or the council were the better economists. The goodness and compliance of the king were loudly praised; and the council finding itself concluded by a determination so unanimous, which left no farther room for debate, at least between the king and his subjects, thought of nothing but returning to Paris, there to conclude this master-piece of policy.

The new council was not formed with so little disturbance as had been expected; that change of temper which retarded the election was so great, that penetrating persons saw from that moment how chimerical a scheme had been embraced by the multitude. The nomination was at last completed, in which the clergy were very busy from the first; and the cardinal de Gondy,* famous for his economical abilities, was put at its head, as if public affairs were to be administered by the same rules as those of a private house. The council of reason held their meetings regularly in the episcopal palace, where the cardinal had assigned them an apartment. But no sooner had they begun to lay papers upon the table for the collection of the payments of the next year, than these new financiers were so much perplexed, that they knew not on which side to turn them. The farther they went the more the labyrinth was perplexed; they found nobody that would undertake for the penny in the shilling; the farmers asked for other funds, but at a discount which put them quite at a loss; and to add to their vexation, the business could not be delayed: all the pensioners of the state came upon them, and talked of nothing but millions to people that had not yet got a single farthing. Chagrin and vexation soon broke the unanimity of the new council; they began immediately to quarrel, and reproach one another with ignorance and rashness.

---

* Peter de Gondy, bishop of Paris, and brother to Albert de Gondy, duke of Retz, a peer and marshal of France, of whom we have spoken before.

Matters were come, in a few weeks, to this pass, that the council of reason could do nothing reasonably; and they were forced to apply to d'Incarville and me, and begged of us to come, at least once a week, and give them such counsel as we gave the king, whose part of the revenue they saw increasing and flourishing day after day. I excused myself on account of my employ, which entirely occupied me. They then addressed the king; who, with his ordinary goodness, commanded me to go: but I did not forget, on this occasion, what was necessary to his service. I lamented the state of affairs of the council; I found no means of extrication, and I helped forward nothing but perplexity. In short, scarce three months had passed before these profound politicians, being at the end of all their art, and sinking under their burden, went to the king to beg to be discharged. The king, who, I believe, began to like this new regulation which set him at ease, told them that every thing was difficult at first; advised them to take heart, and sent them away confuted by their own reasons. But they soon came back, and changed their intreaties to importunity; confessed that they had been in the wrong when they undertook to govern the kingdom, and shewed a thousand times more satisfaction on their dismission from their employment, than they had done at their advancement to it.

This burden fell upon me, as an addition to that with which I was already loaded, and my labour was so great, that it required both my days and nights. As I had a kind of passion for the re-establishment of the finances, I made prodigious advances in the ancient registers of the council of state, the parliaments, the chambers of accounts, and the courts of aids, and even in the private accounts of the former secretaries of state, for the new ones would not communicate theirs. I did the same thing in the offices of the treasurers of France, in the treasury chamber, and in the papers of the treasurers of the exchequer:* I raked even into that vast collection where all the ordonnances are kept inscribed. Having a design to draw up a general state of the finances for the year 1595, which was the end of all my researches, I thought fit to neglect nothing, that I might come as near as was possible, in the first year of my management, to the exactness to which I earnestly desired to carry it. Whatever fraud or mistake had crept into the finances, I imagined that it could be neither so great nor so general, but I should be able to prove and shew its original, by comparing these pieces which I have been mentioning, or by the inferences to be drawn from them, with a due observation of the different proportions of various times and alterations of affairs.

---

* "Rosny, before he entered upon his office of superintendant, "had furnished himself with all the necessary information, the "better to enable him to acquit himself therein: he perfectly knew "all the revenues of the kingdom, and all the expenses necessary "in raising them: he communicated whatever he knew of this matter "to the king, who had in like manner studied all these things "thoroughly himself," &c. Peref. p. 225.

The people of the king's council were terrified at the sight of my project, and beginning to imagine that I should throw every thing open, blamed themselves now more than ever for not having vigorously opposed my admission into the council. Maisses, to whom I must do this justice, that as soon as he discovered my intentions he joined his endeavours with mine, gave me information of their terrors and regret. To confirm them in their suspicions, I declared in public, that I had obtained such intelligence respecting the finances, that they would be presently regulated upon another plan; and I desired that the comptroller-general, the intendant of the finances of France, the treasurer of the exchequer, and the receivers-general, should be joined with me, in order to draw up this general state of the finances, of which these very men were in such terror. I took care, however, to keep the pen always between my own fingers. But I could not this time avoid falling into several considerable errors, nor escape being tricked by these old practitioners. I think it is no shame to confess it; this very year they gained a profit of one fifth, which is exorbitant, though infinitely less than their ordinary gains. I proposed the next year to remedy both this and another mistake which I had committed: one of the chief artifices of the financiers was to make the expenses of the current year appear to be much more than the receipts, and to anticipate the revenues of the following year, by which means the expense of the next year, and of all the rest in succession, were thrown into confusion, from which these men drew many advantages, particularly that of appearing never to have money which was not pre-engaged long before, and of being able to allege this excuse to the king, and all those whom they were not inclined to pay. In the second place, they made use of that money; and, to conclude, they paid off the old debts at a very low price, and yet charged them entire in their accounts. This negligence of mine cost the kingdom this year two millions.

This fault I corrected the following year, during my residence in Brittany; so that from that time forward the receipts and expenses exactly agreed: and in the mean time, to fill up the deficiency which my mistake had made, I took the *parties casuelles, les gabelles,* the five great farms, and the toll of the rivers, out of the hands of the duke of Florence, who held them under the names of Gondy, Senamy, Zamet, le Grand, Parent, l'Argentier, and other old managers, who had no share in the new finances; and I increased these farms with two millions that had been lost by miscomputation. The contractors for the finances, and their associates of the council, were thunderstruck with this last blow; but for this time their spite vented itself in smoke, the king having supported me for some time in a manner so conspicuous, as sunk them all into inactive despondency. The consequence of his conduct to the assembly was, that he was made master, not only of the pretended council of reason, but likewise of his own, whose authority was now declining; and he had no longer cause to fear that his designs would miscarry, as formerly, by their obstruction.

The design in which he was then actually engaged, was the siege of Arras, which had been proposed in the council of war, which, excepting only the secretary, consisted merely of men of action: it had there passed without opposition; but the resolution was kept secret, because only by concealment could we be assured of success. That the merchants with whom I agreed for supplies of all necessary provisions might know nothing of the matter, I named to them a great number of cities along the whole frontier of Picardy, and Arras among the rest, at any of which they bound themselves to deliver, during the whole campaign, fifty thousand loaves a day. Santeny, Robin de Tours, Mauleville, and Lambert chevalier de Guet d'Orleans, engaged likewise for the conveyance of every thing else, and particularly of twenty-five cannons. The contract was made at so low a rate, that if the misfortune that happened at Amiens a short time after, had not obliged us to draw thither the forces designed against Arras, the contractors would have been considerable losers; but as it happened, they made a reasonable profit.

BOOK IX.

1597 to 1598.

I. Diversions at court. The Spaniards surprise Amiens; Rosny contrives the means of retaking this place; he is put at the head of the council of finances in the king's absence; his labours in the finances, and disputes with the council. The siege of Amiens, all the necessaries for which are supplied by Rosny. The Protestants mutiny, during this siege: their designs. Death of St. Luc. Henry promises Rosny the post of grand-master of the ordnance; but gives it to d'Estrées. Rosny made governor of Mante. The Spaniards attempt in vain to succour Amiens; it is taken.—II. An account of Henry's letters upon different subjects. Enterprises after the siege of Amiens: some fail, others are executed. Negociations for a peace. Henry IV. goes into Brittany. Cabals of the Calvinists to obtain a favourable edict.—III. Henry gives audience to the English and Dutch ambassadors, who cannot prevail upon him to continue the war. Edict of Nantz. Henry's conversation with the duke of Bouillon. A singular conversation between between Henry IV. and Rosny, upon the dissolution of his marriage, and his passion for the dutchess of Beaufort.—IV. Henry returns to Paris: goes to Picardy. Conclusion and ceremonies of the peace of Vervins.

I. The preparations that were making for war, did not prevent their enjoying at Paris all the amusements that winter commonly brings along with it. The gentleness of the government secured the tranquillity of the public, who tasted all the sweets of it, without any of that allay which for so long a time had imbittered all their pleasures. Gallantry, shows, play, took up the time of the courtiers; and the king, who liked these diversions through taste, permitted them through policy. Monsieur and madam de Fervaques intreated me to allow of the addresses of monsieur de Laval,* the son of this lady, to my eldest daughter. I referred them to the king, without whose consent I could not now dispose of my daughter, since it had been proposed by the princess, to marry her to monsieur de Rohan, with whom the king being at that time offended, he approved of monsieur de Laval.

From engagements of this nature, the court had every day the pleasure of a new entertainment, the most splendid of which was given by the constable, at the solemnity of baptizing his son. This was the pretence; but it was well known, that one of the most beautiful young ladies of the court, and who was afterwards married to an old man, was the real object of these gallantries. Montmorency chose from amongst the courtiers, twelve noblemen for his ballet, who he thought would appear there with the greatest magnificence, and prevailed upon the king to lay his commands upon me to be of this number. The elegance and propriety with which it was conducted, and which is the very essence of these sort of diversions, was superior to any thing I had ever seen of the kind. This entertainment was universally allowed to have greatly excelled all that went before it: it was likewise the last, and an unfortunate event happened at the conclusion. I retired about two in the morning, and had been an hour and a half in bed, when I saw Beringhen enter my chamber, with the utmost consternation painted in his countenance: he could but just tell me that the king wanted me; and assure me, in answer to my enquiries, that no accident had happened to his person; for this was the first question I asked, and his reply comforted me beforehand for the misfortune, whatever it might be, since I saw none that was absolutely irremediable, but such as threatened his life. I put on my clothes hastily, and ran to the Louvre, in great anxiety of mind: upon my entering the king's chamber, I saw him walking about very fast, his arms folded, his head reclined, and all the marks of a deep uneasiness* impressed on his countenance. The courtiers stood in different corners of the room, leaning against the hangings, without uttering a single word.

---

* William De Hautemer, count de Grancey, seigneur de Fervaques, who afterwards became a marshal of France. His wife was Andrée d' Allegre, widow of Guy count de Laval, whose son was likewise called Guy, the twentieth of that name, count de Laval, de Montfort, &c. who was some time after killed in Hungary: in him ended that branch of Laval, or rather of Rieux, which continued only in the female line; for this Guy count de Laval was of the house of Coligny.

The king coming to meet me, pressed my hand with great emotion, crying, "Ah, my friend, what "a misfortune! Amiens is taken." I confess, I continued immoveable, like all the rest, at this unforeseen blow: a place so strong, so well provided with every thing that was necessary, so near to Paris, and, on the side of Picardy, the only key to the kingdom, to be taken so suddenly, ere we could be informed that it was threatened with an attack! the thing was almost incredible, and the general consternation appeared to be too well grounded. However, I took my resolution immediately, and while the king, who had received this news as he was preparing to go to bed, related to me the manner in which the Spaniards, with some sacks of walnuts, had surprised this important place,* I reflected that, instead of increasing, to no purpose, the general dismay, prudence suggested that, in the present circumstances, it was necessary to keep up every one's spirits, and to comfort the king. I therefore told him that I had in good time just put the finishing hand to a scheme, by which not only Amiens, but several other places, would be restored to him, without much difficulty.

---

* "Being as it were thunderstruck at this, and yet looking up "to heaven as he commonly does more in adversity than prosperity, "he spoke aloud, This blow is from heaven! Then pausing a little "said, I have sufficiently acted the part of king of France, it is "time now that I assume the character of king of Navarre: and "turning to the marchioness, who wept, we must quit our present "warfare, and take horse to engage in another." L'Etoile.

This hint alone seemed on a sudden, to have robbed the late misfortune of half its force; and although it did not hinder the king from reflecting on all the difficulties of an enterprise which might have very fatal consequences, yet, as the astonishment the courtiers were in left them nothing to say in answer to the king's interrogatories but what tended to increase his disquietude, his hopes were greatly raised by what I had said, and he desired to know what methods they were by which I proposed to serve him. I replied, that he should be informed by the papers I had drawn up for that purpose; and

---

* It was on the eleventh of March. Hernand Teillo de Portocarrero, a Spaniard, the author of this scheme, had disguised like countrymen and countrywomen, carrying goods to market, about thirty Spaniards, who stopped up one of the gates of the town, and amused the guard, by overturning at the entrance thereof a cart loaded with sacks full of filberts, one of which became untied; and during this time some Spanish troops, who lay concealed behind the hedges, marched up, and, putting the guard to the sword, made themselves masters of the town. See an account of this in all the historians, under the year 1597. Hernand Teillo was killed in bravely defending this town against Henry IV. He used to say, that the three greatest commanders he knew, where Henry for the conduct of a large army, the duke of Maïenne for the siege of a town, and marshal Biron for a battle. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 232.

I went out as if to fetch them, leaving the king at least in a more composed state of mind than I had found him. Had he been a witness of my perplexity and uneasiness, when I was alone in my closet, he would have suppressed part of those praises which he bestowed on me when I quitted his chamber; for then it was, that, resigning myself up to reflection, I comprehended the whole extent of those misfortunes which might be expected from the present posture of affairs. The king's treasure exhausted, not a single regiment fit for service, at the same time that there was an absolute necessity both for money and troops in great abundance, and that without any delay.

I read over my private memoirs: I revolved in my mind all those schemes for levying money, which I had employed my leisure hours in concerting, foreseeing that the king would soon have an occasion for them. Most of these schemes might be reduced to two different classes; one very easy and plain, wherein all that was necessary to be done was to augment the land-tax, and other imposts already established; the other, more difficult, which consisted in contriving new sources from whence money might be drawn. The first I did not think it prudent to have recourse to, since, after all the hardships which the country people had endured, to oppress them still more by an augmentation of taxes, the sole weight of which falls upon them, and at a time when they had but just begun to breathe again, was to complete the ruin of the state, and to deprive the king himself, for the future, of his most abundant, and, in one sense, his most certain resources.

I then turned my thoughts another way, and fixed upon the following project, which was, to demand of the clergy a free gift for a year, if not for two years, and oblige them to make immediate payment; to augment the old offices with new members, four in each soverign court, besides four masters of accounts in every chamber, two in every office in the finances, two offices of counsellor in every presidial court, an assessor in every royal tribunal, and an elect in every election; to add a third to all the officers of the finances;* to keep back half a year's payment of the arrears of sums borrowed from the contractors in the last reign; to increase the tax on salt fifteen *sous* a pottle, and to leave it always in that state, because such an increase would give room for the suppression of certain offices too chargeable to the public; to raise the entry of goods, and the tolls of rivers a third part, by a new estimate; and, as all these measures gave us, for the most part, only the hope of money, to begin by borrowing twelve hundred thousand livres from the richest people of the court and principal cities, and to assign them payments out of an augmentation of the gabels and five great farms; and, to supply the ready money which we should have occasion for besides, to raise a prosecution in the chamber of justice against the old contractors, who had made considerable fortunes, and oblige them to bear a new tax, in form of a loan.

This plan was indeed of sufficient extent. However, it was not my intention, that these methods should be all made use of at once; but, being uncertain how long the war would continue, they might be employed successively, beginning with those which were the least burthensome. With regard to the troops that were necessary, I thought nothing better could be done than to raise them in those provinces of the kingdom which had no longer any occasion for defence. Thus, I taxed the isle of France, by joining Berry to it, with a complete regiment; the Orleannois with Touraine was to furnish a second; and Normandy itself a third: these regiments were each to consist of fifteen hundred men, to be furnished and maintained by the provinces, from the day of their arrival before Amiens till their departure; because these provinces enjoyed the right of calling the regiments by their own name, and of appointing the officers.

---

* The offices of the finances were possessed by two persons: the first was called l'Ancien; the second, who had been appointed after, was called l'Alternatif; and this third was called Triennal, because he had every third year his rotation with the other two, who alone had the privilege of reimbursing the Triennal.

Five days after, I carried my project to the king, with the proper evidences, formally drawn up in thirteen papers. His majesty retired to examine them with me, in the presence of d'Arambure, Lomenie, Beringhen, and l'Oserai. When I had finished reading them, I told the king, that, with these supplies, there was nothing to retard his departure for the expedition of Amiens; since all the necessary preparations for a camp in Picardy were already made in such a manner, that, I durst assure his majesty, his army would there find not only provision in great plenty, but likewise every thing requisite for mere convenience, with the same ease, and at the same price, as in a city. I added, that whatever resource this scheme might afford the king in his present necessities, his majesty must not imagine it could be carried into execution without increasing the number of those wounds of which France was yet far from being wholly cured: that he need only take a slight view of the immense debts and engagements with which the state was overburthened;

that, to an exhausted state, a new tax, however disguised, is always the same; that the war, therefore, should not be renewed, but with a view of procuring an advantageous peace, which was now become absolutely necessary: and that, however great the public misery was at present, I was fully convinced that twelve years of continued peace would be sufficient to restore the kingdom to a flourishing condition.

I did not doubt but that, by the conduct which the king appeared disposed to observe, the enemy, notwithstanding the advantages he had gained, would be the first to wish for the termination of the war; and at that time I freely disclosed a thought to the king, the justness of which was verified by the event; and this was, that the first overtures for a peace would be made by the king of Spain, whom policy, in that state of weakness and incapacity to which the common course of nature had reduced him, would not permit to expose his crown to the uncertain chances of war, always to be feared, but chiefly in the beginning of a prince's reign who was still a child. I even went so far as to predict, that Spain would purchase peace by the restoration of all the towns she had taken from France.

My scheme for raising money was so much approved by the king, that he resolved to propose it himself in full council; but he communicated it beforehand to a kind of little council of war, composed of the duke of Montpensier, messieurs de Montmorency, de Maïenne, d'Auvergne, de Biron, d'Ornano, de Bellegarde, de Saint-Luc, de Fervaques, de Roquelaure, and de Frontenac: he afterwards summoned an extraordinary council, to which he admitted all in Paris who had a right to a place there, particularly the chief persons of the assembly of Rouen, who still resided there. The king could take no happier measures to establish his authority upon the weakness of this great assembly, which was now acknowledged by themselves. He began with lamenting the loss of Amiens, declaring the necessity there was to recover this city as soon as possible, giving in a full plan of all that was requisite for that purpose: he concluded with asking the advice of all who were present, concerning the means of carrying it into execution, complaining, in order to conceal from them what he himself had to propose, that his most useful and necessary enterprises were always opposed by difficulties, and retarded by delays.

Here the king stopped, as if to wait for the deliberations of the assembly. Each looked upon the other without uttering a single word; at length the nobles broke silence, but it was only to refer the affair to the financiers, who in their turn replied, that it belonged only to the nobles. Henry urging them to deliver their opinions, some general proposals for new levies were made, which were immediately opposed by one half of the assembly; and the counsellors recovered their speech all at one time, to ridicule, in a confused and disorderly manner, whatever might be offered by either party; the king, seizing that moment when their animosity was carried to such a height, that there was not the least probability of their coming to any agreement, drew the memorial out of his pocket, telling them, that, although he had but little experience in the affairs of the finances, yet, upon the present occasion, he would offer his opinion, which he was always ready to give up for a better: he then prepared to read the paper, which threw the whole assembly into a fixed attention, and afterwards into an astonishment, that rendered them speechless and immoveable. Henry suffered them to remain in this silence for a moment or two, then declaring that he understood it as an unanimous consent, added, that as he had no intention to make use of all those measures at one time, he would begin by borrowing the sum of twelve hundred thousand livres; and exhorted the nobles and the wealthiest persons in the kingdom, to comply voluntarily with the present necessity of the times, and to depend upon his royal word, that the lenders should have their principal reimbursed in the space of two years, together with the interest. His majesty then brought forward the fifteen *sous* upon salt, the establishment of a triennial officer in the finances, and an enquiry into the conduct of fraudulent contractors. The affair was decreed, and a decree drawn up upon this plan. We had, in a very little time, three hundred thousand crowns voluntarily lent: the creation of the triennial officers brought in twelve hundred thousand, and the same sum was drawn from the collectors of taxes, to whom the treasurers of France were joined, but were suffered however to tax themselves.

The council of the finances, accustomed to rejoice in the calamity of the people, were soon comforted under these new subsidies, provided they might pass through their hands. They represented to the king, after having greatly commended his memorial, that the success of it depended upon his employing persons of great experience, quick dispatch, and possessed of a full power to execute it. The king replied, that the person he was resolved to employ should be invested with his authority; and that, with regard to the other qualities, he pitched upon me (I was present at this discourse) as the most industrious and most prudent amongst them, although the youngest. He expressed himself in yet stronger terms to Schomberg (whom his majesty visited just before his departure, on account of an indisposition* that confined him to his bed) and to the counsellors he found in the sick count's chamber. He told them, that as I only should bear the blame, if he were not supplied with every thing he had occasion for, while he employed himself wholly in fighting against his enemies, so he was resolved that every thing should be regulated in the council agreeably to my directions. And accordingly, before he went away, he invested me with his whole authority. This mortified Schomberg to such a degree, that he chose rather to go and serve at the siege, than see me at the head of the finances. Sancy likewise left the council, to hold his rank in the army as colonel of the Swiss.

The gentlemen of the council gave me still more reason to suspect them, of which I had a proof in the affair of the triennial offices. After having recorded the edict by which they were created, I endeavoured to raise as much money as was possible from these offices. And to deprive the gentlemen of the council of all means of serving, at a low rate, any relation or friend, as was usual with them, I applied myself with as much assiduity to the pen, as any clerk or treasurer *des parties casuelles;* and not satisfied with using this precaution, I gave a note under my hand to each purchaser, who was obliged to carry it to the treasurer, from whom, after laying down the money, he received an acquittance, and both were to be produced to me.

---

* Gaspard Schomberg, count de Nanteuil. This disorder was a difficulty of breathing, which, on opening his body after death, was found to proceed from an ossification of the left side of the pericardium and some of the neighbouring parts. He was employed in drawing up the edict of Nantes, as will be observed hereafter; and he did many other services to the state. M. de Thou highly commends his character and abilities, both as a warrior and as a statesman.

All artifice becoming ineffectual, the contractors had recourse to a method which, doubtless, had seldom failed before; they attempted to corrupt me with bribes. Robert de Tours, a very considerable contractor, after conferring with the council, whom he had gained over to his interest, came to my house, and entreated one of my secretaries to procure him an interview with my wife, to whom he offered a jewel worth six thousand crowns as a present for me, and another worth two thousand for herself, that I might not oppose a determination of the council, who had assigned to him the nomination of all the triennial officers in the districts of Tours and Orleans, for the sum of seventy-two thousand crowns. He was introduced to me by madam de Rosny, whom, by a severe reprimand in the contractor's presence, I made sensible of the fault she had committed. Nor did I spare him, in order to prevent such attempts for the future. He left me greatly surprised, and probably as much discontented, at my behaviour. I had just been refusing, from another contractor, sixty thousand crowns, for one half of that for which he had before offered me seventy two thousand for the whole; and that very evening, that half brought me eighty thousand crowns, because I divided it into small parcels.

This employment detained me at home all that day and the following, for I thought it of more consequence than to attend the chancellor's summons, who had sent a serjeant of the council twice to me, to desire I would come thither, and finish an affair which would procure the king, he said, seventy-five thousand crowns of ready money. I went as soon as I was disengaged, without thinking any more of Robert de Tours. The chancellor, upon my entering the council-chamber, made me some slight reproaches for my negligence: I answered him bluntly, that I had been more useful to the king in my closet. "We have been no less so "here," returned the chancellor, who sought to enhance the value of the service he had done the king, in procuring him this ready money, by the necessity his majesty was in for it, he having, by two successive letters, demanded some of the council. When I discovered that this was the money which had just before been offered me by the contractor de Tours, he having only added three thousand crowns more to the sum, I represented to these gentlemen, in very strong terms, that since they could not be ignorant that Robert had first applied to me, they ought not to have concluded, without my knowledge, an affair which had appeared to me to be unjust.

Finding that they were endeavouring to impose upon me, partly by complaint, and partly by an air of authority, I told them plainly, that if I had been of a disposition to be gained by bribes, the bargain would not have fallen to them; but that since the king relied upon my fidelity, I would not fail to give him every proof of it in my power. The chancellor, Fresne, and la Grange-le-roi, stung to the quick with the reproach conveyed in these words, had the assurance to mention immediately, that a bargain, by which the king lost more than half of what was due to him, was, notwithstanding, more advantageous for him (since he was paid with ready money), than mine, by which I commonly allowed the purchasers the term of six months for the payment of the second moiety. They did not stop here, but reproached me with setting myself up for a reformer of the finances; and declared, with an air of contempt, that they were able to support their bargain against mine, and that an individual ought not to presume to cancel a decree of the whole body. Upon this, growing violent, the council determined that their assignment to Robert de Tours should take place.

I did not think proper to say one word more concerning this unjustifiable method of proceeding, nor upon the regulation that was made in consequence of it, which was, that thenceforward the council would pay no regard to private notes. But when Fayet, the secretary, brought me this arret to sign, I refused to do so, till I had received the king's answer to a letter, in which, as I told Fayet, I had suppressed no part of the truth, nor concealed the persons: this letter gave Fayet some apprehensions, as I designed it should; he intreated me to shew it him; and pretending to be overcome by his importunity, I yielded. It turned entirely upon the underhand practices which Robert had made use of to gain the gentlemen of the council; all which I had had the good fortune to discover. I likewise gave the king to understand, that this contractor had procured the favour of the council, by making madam de Sourdis,* the chancellor's mistress, the same offers which I had rejected; to which he had added other presents to madam de Deuilly, a relation of the chancellor, and Fresne's mistress. Fayet repeating the contents of my letter to the persons most concerned in it, they sent him back immediately, to intreat I would not send it: the decree was suppressed, and Robert's bargain cancelled.

---

* Isabel Babou de la Bourdaisiere, the wife of Francis d'Escoubleau, marquis de Sourdis; she had an elder sister, called Frances, who was married to Antony d'Estrées, and mother to the fair Gabrielle; and likewise a younger sister, who married Claude de Beauvilliers, the count de Saint-Aignan. The whole of this family was strangely cried down and satirized in the Amours du Grand Alcandre, and other sarcastical libels of that time, even as far back as the grandmother of these three ladies, who was called Mary Gaudin.

In this manner I divided my labours, between the care of receiving the money of the state, and laying it out advantageously for the necessities of the army, which wanted neither provisions nor artillery during the whole time that the siege of Amiens continued. I took a journey regularly every month to the camp, carrying with me each time fifteen hundred thousand crowns, which procured me the friendship of all the principal officers, who were not accustomed to such exact payments. I extended my cares and solicitude even to the private soldiers, by establishing an hospital in the camp, so convenient and so well attended, that several persons of quality went thither to be cured of their diseases or wounds.*

The king's solicitude for the safety of my person,

All the daughters of this line were remarkably beautiful. Leo X. was so charmed with the beauty of Mary Gaudin, at Boulogne, where he had seen her, when he had a conference with Francis I. that he presented her with a diamond, called by domestic tradition Gaudin's diamond. It is Amelot de la Houssaye who speaks thus; and he has collected several such-like anecdotes of the whole family, to which I refer the curious reader, in the article *Babou de la Bourdaisiere.*

* D'Aubigné relates, that it was commonly said at that time, that Henry IV. had brought Paris with him before Amiens, to shew the abundance that reigned in his camp. He likewise brought his mistress to Pecquigny, at which the marshal de Biron and other general officers murmured very much.

which, indeed, he almost carried to excess, more than compensated for all my trouble. Saint-Luc, to whom the count de la Guiche had resigned the post of master-general of the ordnance, took me with him to see his lodgments, knowing my fondness for that part of the military art: this engaged me very far in the trenches and other places in which there was some danger. The king being informed of it, gave me a severe reprimand, absolutely forbidding me to appear at any hazardous post; and said publicly on this occasion, that I had enemies even in the camp, who so eagerly desired my death, that they would voluntarily expose themselves to any danger, provided I shared it with them. It was hardly possible for one who had been a soldier, not to feel his former ardour for war revive, when near a prince who was equal to every military duty, and performed all with an application so unwearied, and a courage so invincible, as might have animated hearts the least sensible to glory.

His example, however, did not produce the same effect upon all. In the very midst of his camp, a cabal of mutinous Protestants was formed, headed by messieurs de la Trémouille, de Bouillon, and du Plessis, which gave the king great uneasiness. Going to pay my respects to him, before I returned again to Paris, I found him in deep affliction: he had just received certain intelligence, that these three gentlemen, in concert with the two Saint-Germains, de Clan and de Beaupré, d'Aubigné,* la

---

* This is the historian d'Aubigné: his name is Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné: his birth, his services, and his courage, gained him great reputation among the Calvinist party: he retired in 1620 to Geneva, where he died in 1631, aged eighty, leaving behind him only one son, called Constans d'Aubigné, whose daughter was Frances d'Aubigné, the late marchioness de Maintenon. Addias de Chaumont,

Case, la Valliere, la Sausaie, la Bertichere, Preaux, Bassignac, Ragnac, Bessais, Constant, and other Protestants, to the number of twenty, had held an assembly of the whole body, wherein they had made a proposal, which they supported with all the power and influence they had, to take advantage of the opportunity the siege of Amiens afforded them,* which could not be carried on without their assistance, to force an edict from the king entirely to

---

seigneur de la Bertichere, brother to John de Chaumont, the marquis de Guitry; his posterity is still extant. Hector de Preaux, &c.

* It is certain, that it was to this conjuncture of the siege of Amiens, and the several steps which the Calvinists of France took to profit by it, that they owed the famous edict of Nantes, which was granted them the year following. The duke de Bouillon does not deny this. All the reasons by which he justifies his conduct, may be seen in Marsolier, liv. v. but the best of all is the protest which he and du Plessis Mornai make, that, whatever might apparently be the view of the Calvinists in these assemblies at Saumur, Laudun, and Vendôme, which were called together immediately after one another, and conducted with a great deal of warmth, neither they nor the other heads of the party ever had an intention of deliberating therein upon taking up arms, but only amicably to endeavour to obtain equitable conditions. We could wish, solely for the entire justification of the duke de Bouillon, that there had not been reason to upbraid him for refusing to follow the king in his expedition to Amiens; and that the surprise of this town by the Spaniards had not been followed, on the part of the Calvinists, by a translation of the Protestant assembly of Vendôme to Châtelleraut, where the proceedings were so violent, that the king was obliged to send thither M. de Schomberg, de Thou, de Vic, de Calignon, and de Montglat, who were charged with full powers to offer such conditions as sufficiently shew, that Henry IV. thought he had every thing to fear from them. Consult the Memoirs of the duke de Bouillon; his Hist. by Marsolier; the Hist. of the edict of Nantes; the life of du Plessis Mornai; the verbal process of the assemblies of Vendôme and Châtelleraut, &c. but especially d'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 11. where he relates, at very full length, all the schemes and cabals of the Calvinist party, and the new turn which they endeavoured to give their affairs.

their satisfaction; or, if he refused, to do themselves justice, by taking up arms against him. Happily for the king, this proposal was objected to by many persons in the assembly, as well as in some of the great towns, which they had endeavoured to draw over to their party. His majesty was a little comforted by this circumstance, but he had reason to apprehend, that the most violent party would carry it at last. He commanded me to write to some of the principal amongst them, to prevail upon them, if possible, to resume more reasonable sentiments, and particularly the duke de la Tremouille, whom he knew to be the chief promoter of the conspiracy.

Hitherto I had preserved some degree of intimacy with la Tremouille, insomuch that he thought himself obliged to require my presence in these assemblies, but concealed the occasion of them; and in his letter to me made use of such ambiguous terms, as it was not difficult to judge, that I was considered by these gentlemen as a man unfaithful to his own party; and that la Tremouille was not far from engaging in an open rebellion. This did not hinder me, however, from taking advantage of the remaining correspondence there was between us, to endeavour to bring him back to his duty. I wrote to him in answer, that although it were true, the king, in respect to him, was such as he imagined, yet there was neither honour nor greatness in extorting from him a declaration which was the effect only of necessity; but that, in reality, this prince had the same sentiments as formerly for the Protestants; that he was not the cause of that injustice they suffered from the Catholics, since he had equal reason to complain of them himself; that besides he should observe, that the consequence of this edict, obtained so unseasonably, would not be so advantageous for them as they imagined, since the Catholics, always more powerful than they, were able to prevent it for the present; and for the future, the king, justly offended at their violent proceedings, would lose all inclination to grant them one day, voluntarily, what in so unfavourable a conjuncture they wanted to anticipate by force; and all the effect which an unsuccessful attempt would produce, would be to create a distrust of them in the Catholic party, and put them upon their guard against them. I reminded Tremouille of the examples of those illustrious Protestants, who, on all occasions, both by their words and conduct, shewed, that a Protestant who acts conformable to his faith, has the good of the state, and the true interest of his king always in view. Tremouille was so little moved with my letter, that he shewed it to every one, and made a public jest of it: but these designs not being supported by a sufficient number of partisans, they fell to the ground.

The post of master-general of the ordnance became vacant at my fourth visit to the camp. Saint-Luc* looking between two gabions, where, in appearance, there was scarcely room enough for a cannon-ball to enter, was unfortunately shot dead by one. The king was conversing alone with me when Villeroi and Montigny came to tell him the news, which they would not impart in the presence of any other person, because of the particular designs each had on this post. I came up to the king again when they had left him, and his majesty informed me of Saint-Luc's death, and likewise that Villeroi and

---

* Francis d'Epinai de Saint-Luc: he is called the brave Saint-Luc. See his eulogy in Brantôme's *Vies des Hommes Illustr.* in the article *Saint-Luc*, tom. I.

Montigny had asked him for this post; the first for his son d'Alincourt, or his nephew Château-neuf-l'Aubepine,* and Montigny for himself. Saint-Luc had genius, readiness of invention, was capable of great industry, and possessed of much personal courage; the only fault he could be charged with, was his resigning himself up too much to a lively imagination, which furnishing him with scheme after scheme, he consumed in theory great part of that time which should have been employed in practice. The king, however, thought neither of the candidates capable of filling his place; d'Alincourt wanted fortitude, and, as the king said, was therefore not fit for a post in which the greatest dangers were to be risked: Chateau-neuf† concealed his want of real genius under an appearance of affectation and grimace. Montigny was, in truth, valiant, and of warm affections; but these qualities were not sufficient to entitle him to so considerable a post, as he was without expedient, order, or economy.

His majesty, by talking to me in this manner, appeared to have no other reason for hesitating whether he should bestow this post upon me, but a doubt that the duties of it were incompatible with those of superintendant of the finances. It was not difficult for me to undeceive him; and that instant he promised I should have it; but deferred this proof of his friendship for me, till the siege was at an end, my presence being, in his opinion, necessary at Paris; during which time he would leave the place vacant. I did not see the king all the following day, and unfortunately for me, he saw the marchioness of Monçeaux in that interval, who omitted nothing to prevail upon him to change his resolution in favour of the elder d'Estrées, her father. The king resisted the entreaties of this lady, and even her tears, but he was not proof to her threats of throwing herself into a convent, if he refused her this favour. The fear of losing her rekindling all the ardours of his passion, she obtained the post for her father. The next day the king, with some confusion for the weakness he had shewn, informed me of what had passed; however, in one circumstance he took care of my interests, by conditioning with monsieur d'Estrées, who was utterly incapable of exercising this employment himself, that he should exchange it for the first post under the crown which should become vacant, and absolutely resign it (if a more important war should happen to break out) in favour of him whom his majesty should appoint: and he again engaged his word to me, that I should be that person.

---

* Charles de l'Aubepine, marquis de Chateau-neuf. Francis de la Grange, seigneur de Montigny.

† He was made keeper of the seals in 1630, and resigned them in 1633.

I was satisfied with this assurance, and returned to Paris, where a few days afterwards I received news from the camp of the death of my youngest brother, governor of Mante,* whom I had left in good health. Of four brothers his death reduced us to two. The king rejected all the applications that were made to him by several persons for the government of Mante, and bestowed it without any solicitation upon me. I received this gift by the same letter which his majesty wrote to me on occasion of my brother's death, together with the writings necessary to invest me with all the rights of my brother, who died without children. I sent Baltazar, my secretary, to Amiens, to procure my patent for the government, which, as soon as I had received, I went to Mante to be acknowledged governor, designing to stay there but four days.

---

* Solomon de Bethune, baron de Rosny, and governor of Mante. This is the third of the four brothers, of whom we have spoken in the beginning of these Memoirs: he was only thirty-six years of age when he died.

The gentlemen of the council supposing my absence would be much longer, and probably followed by a resignation of my employment in the finances, were full of joy; and one of the first advantages they drew from it, was to take proper measures for appropriating to themselves part of those sums destined for the siege of Amiens. They all signed a letter to his majesty, written in the name of the council, in which they represented to him that, having been supplied with every thing that was necessary for the siege during five months, his majesty could not be surprised to hear that his funds were quite exhausted, having nothing remaining but some bad arrears and assignments of payment. Henry, who knew not that I was at Mante, and who by an effect of his natural vivacity, had not examined the signatures of this letter, was so much the more surprised at it, as I had positively assured him that I was able to furnish him with the usual sums for four months longer, which was as long as the siege was expected to last. He exclaimed in very severe terms against the gentlemen of the council, in the presence of the chief officers of his army; nor for this once was I spared any more than the rest: but after a moment's reflection, casting his eyes upon the names subscribed to this letter, among which he did not see mine, and learning from the courier that I was at Mante, he condemned himself immediately for his too precipitate anger; and that the reparation he made me might be complete, he read my answer to the letter he wrote me upon this occasion, in the presence of the same persons.

His interest indeed required that he should remove their apprehensions: a siege so extremely laborious had sometimes discouraged both them and their soldiers to such a degree, that an absolute desertion would have been the consequence of his treasure being exhausted, since, upon the least delay of the remittances, the king could not have prevented many from leaving him. All went on well to the end; if the besieged defended themselves with vigour, and made sallies upon sallies, they were attacked with the same spirit, and were always defeated.

The sap was carried as far as the ramparts, and the besiegers had just taken possession of two casemates, which they rendered useless to the besieged, when the cardinal archduke, with the count of Mansfield, who served under him in quality of lieutenant-general, thought it time to make an effort to prevent the reduction of the place: they marched towards it with an army consisting of between twelve and thirteen thousand foot, and two or three thousand horse, and passed the river of Authie, with an intention to offer the king's forces battle, or at least to throw a considerable supply into Amiens. All that endeavoured to enter were driven back.*

---

* Perefixe relates this fact very differently. "The archduke," says he, "came and lay before the quarter called Longpré, on the "15 of September, at two in the afternoon, when nobody expected "him. He might have easily thrown three thousand men into "Amiens; so great was the consternation which was spread in the "camp. Henry, doubting of the success of that day, exclaimed aloud, "O Lord (at the same time leaning upon the pommel of his saddle, "with his hat in his hand, and his eyes lifted toward heaven) if it

The king went himself to reconnoitre the enemy's army: he had a full view of it; and notwithstanding the superiority of their numbers, finding them a confused and disorderly multitude, without discipline or conduct, resolved to attack them; but at the first motion he made, the archduke retreated with precipitation:* probably it would not have

---

"is to day that thou intendest to punish me, as my sins deserve, I "offer up my life a sacrifice to thy justice, spare not the guilty; "but, O Lord, for thy great mercy's sake, pity this poor kingdom, "andchastise not the flock for the errors and faults of the shepherd." "It is impossible to express the effect produced by these words: "they spread in an instant through the whole army; and it seemed "as if heaven had inspired every one with courage." Perefixe, part 2. Most part of the historians agree, that the Spaniards let slip one of the finest opportunities they ever had of beating the king's army: and this prince said himself afterwards, that some of his chief officers told him all was now lost. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 234.

* The king said of the cardinal archduke, that he came on like a soldier, but went off like a priest. La Curée very earnestly desired of the king, that he would be pleased to let him go and discover the posture of the enemy's army, putting his majesty in mind, that the Spaniards had entered France four times, and that he had every time attacked them, and was the first who had beaten them. Henry made answer, M. La Curée, don't be in a hurry; and at the same time gave him leave. La Curée was much spoken of in this affair for his valour, and the noble retreat he made before this army encamped at Betancourt, four leagues from Amiens. However, he afterwards said upon this occasion, that when three or four hundred men retreat in this manner before a whole army, it is only the fault of that army, if they are not cut off. He was an undaunted man: for one day he flung himself into the midst of the enemy, when by his hand being numbed with holding his pistol, he could not use his sword. There were even women dressed like men, who fought in the French army; four among them were very remarkable, and distinguished themselves in taking prisoners with their own hands, and one especially, who went under the name of captain Gascon. These particulars are taken from vol. 8929 of the king's MSS. See also on this head, tom. vi. des Memoires de la Ligue, in which are given very high commendations of the spirit, alertness, and valour of Henry IV.

been impossible to have forced the Spaniards to a battle, and to have beat them without discontinuing the siege: at least Henry was always of this opinion. Nevertheless, he yielded to the advice of the greatest number, who were for allowing the archduke to retreat. After this, they applied themselves closely to the siege. The ravelin having been carried away, and the body of the place beginning to be sapped, Amiens surrendered the latter end of September, 1597, which had been almost wholly employed in the siege.*

II. When I look upon the great number of letters which I received from the king during the siege of Amiens, I cannot help being surprised that a prince, who had the operations of a great siege upon his hands, and the care of a whole camp, should yet be so attentive to all affairs within his kingdom, and with equal facility and equal diligence acquit himself of such opposite employments. I shall spare the reader the trouble of perusing all these letters, as likewise those which his majesty did me the honour to write to me afterwards. I reckoned above three thousand, exclusive of those which I have neglected to preserve, or have been lost through the carelessness of my secretaries. It would be too tedious to give a particular account of each: some of them I suppress in obedience to his majesty's orders, as they regarded persons whose reputation he had no desire to wound, and whom I have doubtless more reason to avoid offending, as I should do by revealing intrigues of state, or merely affairs of gallantry, which have still continued secret: as for the rest, they turned wholly upon accounts, application of particular sums, payments, pensions, and other things of the same nature, all of which were so dry and unentertaining, that they afford new matter for praises of this prince.

---

* On quitting Amiens," says Perefixe, "the king led his army to "the gates of Arras, where he remained three days in order of battle, and saluted the town with some discharges of cannon; but "finding he could not draw the enemy to an engagement, he returned greatly dissatisfied, as he jocularly observed, at the incivility of the Spaniards, who would not advance a step to meet him, "and had refused with an ill-grace the honour he intended them." "Marshal Biron," says the same author, "behaved admirably during the siege of Amiens; when the king returned to Paris, and "was met by a deputation of the citizens, he said to them, pointing "at the same time to the marshal—This is marshal Biron, whom I "present with great pleasure both to my friends and my enemies." Ibid. pt. II. Edit.

With regard to his finances, for example, he was so extremely exact as to make me give him an account once a week, of the money received, and the uses it had been put to.* He does not fail to remark that, in casting some cannon, they wanted to rob him of a piece. In a remission of six or seven thousand crowns which he was obliged to grant the people upon the land-taxes, he settles himself the gratuity that ought to be repaid to certain parishes which had suffered most. He calculated exactly the number of the offices that were sold, and the money arising from thence. He never forgot any person to whom the state was indebted, or who had done it service, either in the distant provinces or the neighbouring kingdoms, assigning with the utmost discernment a particular fund for all. His great care was, that the fund appointed for the support of the war should not be broken in upon by any other payment, as appears when he mentions a recompense to be given to the sieur de Vienne, who had brought back the city of Tour to its obedience, or the repayment of four thousand crowns that he had borrowed of madam de Beaufort.

---

* A hundred crowns could not be expended, says Perefixe, but he knew whether they were well or ill laid out.

The number of his letters relating to his military affairs are prodigious. He calculated so justly the sums necessary for making of trenches and other works, together with the soldiers pay, that there was no danger of a mistake in following him. The order he observed in the march of his troops was not regulated with less prudence than that of the convoys of money which came to his camp, that the one might not be retarded, nor the other intercepted.

All this made up but one part of his cares. The letter wherein he speaks of the repairs of Montreuil, Boulogne, and Abbeville; those in which he expatiates upon the method of maintaining regularity in the provinces, obedience in the cities, subordination in the different bodies, on occasion of the chamber of accounts which had failed in the respect they owed him; that in which he says, "I would "not mix the expenses of masquerades with those "destined for the use of my army;" for Mortier, who had provided dresses for a masque, had caused the money laid out on that occasion to be inserted in a memorial of military expenses; that also which contained his reply to the offer which the city of Paris made him by her mayor and aldermen, to support, at their own expense, twelve hundred men, in consideration of which service, he discharged this city from paying the aids a second time, and many others of this kind; all these shew, that the same hand that was able to draw up a plan of attack, was equally capable of conducting the affairs of the cabinet.

The only thing he neglected was his personal maintenance; to make him think of it, Montglat, the first steward of his household, was forced to inform him, as he tells us in some of his letters, that he could scarce "make the pot boil any longer." He was not ashamed to confess a thing which affected his domestic enemies only; it was their part to blush that he was destitute of apparel, arms, and horses: however, he afterwards found means to settle a fund for his own subsistance, which could not be confounded with any other; it was the mark of gold arising from the offices which were sold, that he destined for this use. Such were the subjects of many of the letters he wrote me this year, from which the reader may judge of those of the following years, the originals of which I keep with the utmost care, but shall only transcribe the most important amongst them. It is remarkable, that although there are a great number of them, and almost all very long, yet, there are few, that are not written with his own hand, particularly those which are directly addressed either to the council or to me.*

I was present at the council which was held after the surrender of Amiens, upon the operations of the rest of the campaign. The following propositions were made: to follow the enemy's army, seize some cities of Artois by surprise, and besiege Dourlens* in form: upon which each one that was present gave his opinion; mine was, that it could not be expected the cardinal infant, who had so obstinately refused to fight, when he had no other way of succouring Amiens, would suffer himself to be forced to an engagement now, when he was sensible he should have all the king's army to encounter, and had had sufficient time to take measures to avoid it; nor was it more probable, that the enterprises upon the cities of Artois would succeed, in the neighbourhood of so numerous an army: yet that either of these designs appeared to me more judicious than the project of laying siege to Dourlens, as we might know in fifteen days what was to be expected from the former, and incur no shame by failing in them; whereas, by following the latter, we should infallibly have the regret to find that we had consumed a great deal of time, money, and troops, to no purpose. It was resolved, that the two first measures should be suddenly attempted, without renouncing the siege of Dourlens. The Spaniards kept upon their guard, and the French gained no other advantage by this attempt, than the honour of having endeavoured to finish the war by a single action, which contributed as much as all the rest, to make the king of Spain desirous of peace.

---

* I observed in the preface the reasons that induced me not to transcribe here so many letters. They may be seen at the head of the new collection of Henry le Grand's letters: the originals of some of them are at this day to be seen in the fine museum of the duke de Sully, with marginal notes written by Maximilian de Bethune's own hand. But the most valuable pieces in this cabinet, beside a considerable number of original letters of Henry III. and other cotemporary princes, are papers of state, letters, serious or gay pieces, and other fragments, writ by Henry le Grand's own hand, and by his chief minister, or only signed or marked in the margin by them. We have already spoken of those that concern the accommodation of the admiral de Villars, and other governors and towns, especially in Normandy: we shall have occasion in the sequel to mention particularly some others.

It was quite the reverse with the enterprise on Dourlens, upon which they were obstinately bent. The king sent to me at Paris, whither I had now returned, his last resolutions on this head. I did not scruple to represent to him, in still stronger terms,

* A city of Picardy.

the reasons that had hindered me from approving the proposal; that his army, having suffered considerably at the siege of Amiens, was not in a condition to undertake a second equally laborious, in the month of October, a season when the ground about Dourlens, which is naturally moist and clayey, was made impracticable by the rains, and within sight of an army eager to seize an occasion of being revenged. The king did not take my freedom amiss, though he was not convinced by my reasons. He wrote to me in answer, that the expedition of Dourlens was absolutely necessary for the preservation of Amiens and Abbeville: that by putting Picardy in a state of security, he should facilitate the sale of the new offices; and that he would take such measures, that the siege should not continue so long as I apprehended.

Accordingly Dourlens was invested on the ninth of October, 1597, and on the thirteenth, the rains had so much spoiled the ground and the roads, that the works could not be brought forward. Villeroi informed me in a letter, that they already repented of their attempt: indeed, the king set out almost immediately after, from his quarters at Beauval, and came to Belbat, where he gave orders for raising the siege, at which the soldiers had suffered so much during the short time it had lasted, that they were upon the point of disbanding. The king caused them all to be paid, placing them in winter quarters upon the frontier, left his light horse there, retrenched part of the garrisons which the surprising of Amiens had obliged him to throw into the neighbouring places, and set forward for Paris, to spend the winter there, taking his route through Rouen and Monçeaux, where he staid eight days.

From this place the king sent me orders to remove the difficulties which the chancellor de Chiverny raised in the parliament, to erect his country of Armagnac and Lectoure into a presidial; and to assign the money arising from it to the payment of the costs awarded by the parliament to the sieur de Fontrailles, count of Armagnac, in a suit which he had carried on in that court against his majesty. As the princess might have some claims upon this money, by virtue of the cession her brother designed to make her of all his estates in this province, the king desired me to keep the matter secret, and used the same precautions with Fontrailles and the chancellor, the last of whom observed this command very ill; but his indiscretion had no bad consequence, the princess leaving the court of France a short time after. In the same letter, the king ordered me to pay Demeurat his solicitor at Riom, as likewise La-Corbiniere, who was employed to furnish provisions for the troops that were left in Picardy. It was in these intervals from business, that he extended his attention to the most inconsiderable objects. He made me give the sieur de Piles, an old and faithful servant, a reward of three thousand crowns, and another of eight thousand livres to Gobelin, to whom, at the same time, he repaid sixteen thousand livres, advanced by him for the support of his household. There was no name, even to that of the poor woman who gathered the taxes at Gisors, which was not mentioned somewhere in his letters.

The poverty of the people,* which was indeed excessive, having produced many blanks in the receipts for the taxes, the king suspected that the gentlemen of the council, who were very zealous in representing and exaggerating these deficiencies, would find means, when they had obtained a discharge for the people, to put large sums into their own pockets, by concealing the discharge that had been granted; he ordered me first to get information, whether the people were really as much behind hand in the years 1594 and 1595, as those gentlemen had made him believe; which could easily be done, by examining the accounts of receipts and expenses given in by the general and particular receivers, and by visiting the courts of the same provinces, whither I had already gone; and secondly, to examine whether this deficiency of the taxes did not proceed from deception or disobedience in the people.

---

* Bongars, describing in his letters the desolation which the civil wars had caused in the kingdom, assures us, among other things, that the highways were so over-run with briars and thorns, that it was difficult to discover the tracks. Epist. 73. ad Camerar.

To conclude, his majesty began to busy himself at Monçeaux with another matter of importance, that of drawing up articles, on which he desired to come to an agreement with the Protestants. This work he pressed for some time upon the chancellor and Villeroi: I was likewise ordered to engage in it; but he would have had reason to complain a long time of the little attention which those men paid to his design, if he had not come himself to Paris to put it in execution.

These two last affairs concerning the financiers and the Protestants required more leisure than the king, upon his arrival at Paris, was able to afford them. He was obliged to turn his thoughts upon making new preparations for going, the following spring, into Brittany, where the rebels, finding themselves out of the view of their sovereign, continued, in disorder and disobedience with impunity. The duke of Mercœur, who was at their head, durst not openly, however, favour their revolt; on the contrary, the letters he wrote to the king were filled with seeming tokens of submission; and during the space of two years, it had been his whole study to amuse him with feigned proposals which he knew how to evade fulfilling. The king, on his side, had constantly dissembled with the duke, and hitherto contented himself with favourably receiving the officers of this province, who, weary of Mercœur's delays, addressed themselves directly to his majesty: but at length, the king thinking it time to go and attack this rebellious subject, even at his own doors,* this design, which was carried on with the utmost secrecy, employed us during the whole winter.

It would have answered no purpose to have undertaken it without a body of twelve hundred foot, and two thousand cavalry, and a train of twelve pieces of artillery, at least; and it was not possible to draw out these troops from the six thousand foot, and twelve hundred horse, which his majesty thought necessary for the defence of the frontier of Picardy, and which he had committed to the care of the constable, assisted by the counsels of messieurs Bellievre, Villeroi, and Sillery. New funds were to be found for the support of all these troops; the taxes could not possibly be increased otherwise than by lessening the costs of the collection, which is with respect to the king a real increase. I likewise applied myself to collect the debts that were in arrear, and to recover such as were neglected; to which I joined some new imposts, few in number, and not oppressive.

---

* One of the duke de Mercœur's friends having asked him one day, if ever he dreamed of being duke of Brittany, he made answer, "I know not whether it be a dream, but it has lasted these ten "years and upwards." The dutchess de Mercœur's grandmother was Charlotte, heiress of the house of Penthievre, whose pretended rights to the dutchy of Brittany were apparently the foundation of those of the duke de Mercœur.

The king, without these supplies, would have been obliged to listen to proposals for a peace, and could not then have concluded one, but upon terms very advantageous to Spain. Pope Clement the Eighth desired peace with great ardour; and, long before the campaign of Picardy, had sent the cardinal of Florence,* in quality of league, to propose it to the king; at the same time Calatagironne,† patriarch of Constantinople, went, by his holiness's orders, to Spain for the same purpose. The negociations had been unfortunate in the beginning. The king, more irritated than discouraged by the seizure of Amiens, only answered the cardinal haughtily, that he would defer hearing what he had to propose, till after he had regained this place. The king of Spain, on the other hand, although it was with regret that he beheld the war renewed, yet founded great hopes upon his success in Flanders, and particularly upon having surprised the city of Amiens, the possession of which might draw along with it that of all the neighbouring country from the Oise to the Seine.

The expeditions of the campaign being more favourable to the French, drew both sides nearer an accommodation. Philip knew Henry to be a prince with whom it was as difficult to preserve as to gain advantages, and having besides a foreboding in his own mind, that the illness he was seized with would be mortal, the fear of leaving at his death the prince his son exposed to such an enemy as the king of France, induced him to listen to the advice of Calatagironne, who, when he was assured of the king's inclinations, returned to Rome to acquaint the pope with them, and was by his holiness deputed to France, to give the cardinal of Florence an account of his success, and to act in concert with him.

---

* Alexander de Medicis.

† Father Bonaventure de Calatagironne, general of the order of Saint Francis.

Accordingly their eminences renewed their former solicitations with Henry, and often represented to him, that the peace, in some measure, depended wholly upon him. The king, who was undeceived in his turn, and no longer influenced by those great and flattering hopes, which, through a reliance upon the promises of his courtiers, he had entertained, saw the return of the two negociators with pleasure, though he appeared indifferent to their proposals: at length, he told them, that he would not be against a peace, provided Spain would give up all she possessed in his dominions. The legates hinted, that this might possibly be obtained; and the king replied, that upon this plan he permitted them to treat, and conclude a peace with the three ministers he had left in Picardy, to whom he referred them; in the mean while, that he might not lose the advantage of those preparations he had made for war, nor waste time so precious in mere negociations, he set out for Brittany.

The king took his route through Angers, in the beginning of March, 159$\frac{7}{8}$, ordering his army to follow him by short marches: he permitted his council likewise to attend him, but not till it had made the necessary dispositions for supplying his army in Brittany, and the troops and commissioners for the peace in Picardy, with all things that were needful. As I now had the absolute direction of the council, and met with no opposition whatever, I quickly put matters in such a state, that I thought I might join the king without any bad consequence. I expected to have found him already far advanced in Brittany, and was greatly surprised to hear, as I drew near Angers, that he had not left that city. The duke of Mercœur must have been infallibly ruined but for the service he received from mesdames de Mercœur* and de Martigues† upon this occasion: they began with obtaining, through the interest of the marchioness de Monçeaux, a passport to meet the king at Angers,‡ where, as soon as they arrived, they intirely gained over the king's mistress to their party. The dutchess de Mercœur offered her only daughter in marriage to whomsoever the king thought proper, hinting to the marchioness, that she would not be against marrying this opulent heiress to her son Cæsar.§ The marchioness of Monçeaux was so agreeably flattered by this alliance, that considering from that moment, the duke of Mercœur's interests as her own, she solicited for him with the utmost ardour and assiduity: the two ladies likewise employed every art to soften a prince remarkable for his complacency to the sex. Henry suffered himself to be disarmed by their submissions, promises, and tears, and no longer thought of chastising the duke of Mercœur.

---

* Mary de Luxembourg, daughter to Sebastian de Luxembourg, duke of Penthievre and viscount de Martigues, was wife to Philip Emanuel de Lorrain, duke de Mercœur.

† Mary de Beaucaire, daughter to John, seigneur de Peguillon, widow of Sebastian de Luxembourg, and mother to the dutchess de Mercœur.

‡ They had come thither before the king, but were refused entrance; upon which they withdrew to Pont de Cé, till the king arrived at Angers.

§ "The espousals were celebrated at Angers, with the same magnificence as if he had been a lawfully-begotten son of France: he was but four years of age, and she but six." Peref. 2d part.

The moment I alighted at Angers I went to pay my respects to the king. This prince, who by the first word I uttered, and the turn only of my countenance, comprehended all I had in my mind, embracing me closely in his arms, and pressing me to his bosom, " My friend," said he to me, " you " are welcome; I am truly glad to see you here, " for I have had great need of you." " And I, " sire," I replied (incapable of those mean compliances that are dictated by flattery), " I am greatly " grieved to find you still here." " It is long," said the king, interrupting me, " since we have " learned to understand each other by half a word; " I guess already what you would say to me; but " if you knew what has passed, and to what forwardness I have already brought affairs, you " would alter your opinion." I replied, that those advantages, whatever they were, which he alluded to, he might have obtained, and many far more considerable, if, instead of stopping at Angers, he had presented himself before Nantes, at the head of his army. The king endeavoured to excuse himself upon the want of implements proper for the siege of the city. I answered, that he would have had no occasion for them, because Nantes would have rendered them unnecessary by a surrender, and perhaps have delivered* the duke of Mercœur into his hands. The first of these things it was highly probable would have happened, and the king acknowledged that he believed so. After this confession I added, "It is true, I do not find the bravery of "my sovereign in this instance; but I shall say nothing, because I know what it was that withheld you." With this prince, I was not apprehensive my sincerity would have any bad consequences. He confessed all to me, though with some little confusion, alleging as an excuse, his compassion for those who were in a state of humiliation, and the fear of disobliging his mistress.

---

* All the historians agree, that Henry IV. was in a condition to have made the duke de Mercœur smart for his disobedience: he would never suffer that this duke should send him any person in his name to Vervins; and protested, that he would rather endure a continual war, than consent that one of his subjects should thus seem to treat with him like a foreign prince.

After this, the conversation turned wholly upon news: his majesty informed me that he had just received letters from the queen of England, "by "which," said he, "she informs me, that she and "the states have dispatched ambassadors to me; but "whether to take a part in this treaty for peace, or "to divert me from it, I know not, though I rather "apprehend for the latter purpose." By other letters, from Bellievre and Sillery, he was informed, that the legates had offered, in the name of Spain, to restore all the cities, except Cambray, that had been taken during the war. The king's carrying troops into Brittany, without being under a necessity of leaving Picardy defenceless, had given great surprise to Spain, and satisfaction to the court of London, ever solicitous to humble the pride of that power. I advised Henry not to refuse a peace for the sake of a single city, and to be satisfied with having driven the enemy out of Picardy and Brittany.

This latter province, which had panted for tranquillity a long time, was sensible how much it owed to his majesty, whose presence at the head of an army was the only thing which could procure it that happiness. The party of Mercœur became the king's party. The Spaniards were not in a condition to hold out long against their united forces. Blavet* and Douarnenes, where they were cantoned in the greatest numbers, could not fail of yielding soon to the common fate, and a few days were sufficient to clear the province entirely of its foreign enemies; it afterwards assembled its states, in order to prove its gratitude to the king, by granting him a considerable subsidy. His majesty commanded me to continue my route to Brittany, and while I waited there for his arrival, to pay the troops, and quarter them in barracks in the neighbourhood of Rennes and Vitré, with orders to keep up a strict discipline there; after which I was to go to Rennes, to represent his majesty's person in the states, to hasten their resolutions concerning the sums that were promised, and to use all my authority to facilitate the levying them. The king having an inclination to stay some days longer at Angers, laid hold of the pretence, that something was still wanting in the treaty with the duke of Mercœur.

I had no reason to be offended with the dutchess of Mercœur for having endeavoured to procure the most favourable conditions she could; yet I so far resented her making the king the dupe of her arts, that if his majesty had not obliged me to pay her a visit, I would have left Angers without seeing her; although I was related to this lady by the same side by which I had the honour to be allied to the royal family, that is, by the house of Luxembourg.*

---

* Blavet is now called Port Louis, and lies in the bishopric of Vannes: Douarnenes is another port and road, in the bishopric of Quimper.

The king remonstrated with me, that if the consideration of being related to her, together with the laws of politeness, were not sufficient to induce me to pay her this respect, yet the dutchess of Mercœur deserved it on account of that regard she had for me, which the knowledge of my intentions could not alter. Indeed I was received by her and madam de Martigues with the highest distinction and respect. Madam de Mercœur, after some gentle reproaches for having endeavoured to injure her interest, and that of her daughter, my little kinswoman, told me, that there was nothing she so ardently desired, as to be able to put the affairs of the duke, her husband, into my hands, that I might conclude this treaty with the king in whatever manner I thought fit. I answered the dutchess, that while my respect and adherence to her were not inconsistent with the service of the king, which always carried me against any other consideration, she should find nobody more disposed to serve her than myself.

I went to Château-Gonthier that evening, and reached Vitré the next day, where I saw but too plainly of what importance it was to be extremely cautious and circumspect in quartering troops, that nothing might be neglected. Messieurs de Salignac and de Mouy, marshals de camp, were of great use to me upon this occasion. Tranquillity was so perfectly established in all this part of the country, that the peasants, who at first had retreated to the woods, and fortified themselves there, where they were every moment ready to come to blows, now returned to their houses; and the city of Rennes thought that some acknowledgment was due to me: for this reason, when the states were assembled, a fine apartment was prepared for me during my abode in that city, at the house of mademoiselle de la Riviere: she was a woman of wit and gallantry, who being always looking out for pleasures for herself, was the fitter for the commission with which she was charged, of engaging me in all the entertainments that are commonly found in opulent and polite cities like Rennes. If the life of a minister were to be at all times like that which I led in this city, and which lasted almost six weeks, it would have in reality all those charms which are so falsely attributed to it. I had no other employment than being present at the assembly of the states, who, with all possible gratitude, agreed to the service the king required of them, and granted him, without any opposition, eight hundred thousand crowns, of which one hundred was to be paid the first month, as much the second, and afterwards two hundred each month, till the whole was paid. To furnish this sum, a tax of four crowns was laid upon every pipe of wine. The assembly were desirous of adding six thousand crowns as a present to me, which I refused, without examining whether this was among the number of those occasions when I might have been permitted to accept a present. The king, to whom the merit of my disinterestedness had been highly exaggerated, and who had himself bestowed more praises on my conduct in the assembly, than it deserved, was resolved, that the expense of a present to me should be his, and instead of six, gave me ten thousand crowns. During six and twenty years, which I had spent in his majesty's service, I had never received so considerable a gift. On this occasion there was a kind of generous contest betwixt the king and the province of Brittany, which at last obtained, that these ten thousand crowns should be added to the eight hundred thousand the assembly had voted his majesty.

---

* Jane de Bethune, daughter to Robert, the sixth ancestor of M. de Sully, was married to John de Luxembourg.

The treaty with the duke of Mercœur being completed, the king sent it to the chamber of accounts at Rennes to be registered.* As some private articles in this treaty were not expressed, the court thought it had a right to refuse registering it, without certain restrictions with respect to these articles. Henry, who knew better than any other prince in the world, how far the power of these sovereign courts extended, and who always appeared careful not to make the least encroachment upon it, resented this refusal with becoming spirit; and, together with the dispatches which I received from him regularly every day, he sent me an order in writing for the chamber of accounts, in which he observed, that this court could not be ignorant, that in all treaties or acts relating merely to war or the king's person, the sovereign of France took counsel with no person, nor demanded his letters to be registered but as a formality, which otherwise was little essential; he reproved them for their rash conduct, and ordered them to repair their disobedience by an absolute submission to his will.

---

* The duke of Mercœur came to the king at Angers. In the first interview the English ambassadors had with the king, he told them that he had put off the duke's entry till their arrival (which was on the 17th of March, $159\frac{7}{8}$), as he was sure their presence did vex him: and, " true it is," say they in their letter, " that all the " people, when he came in, cried out: *Here is the tail of the league!* " *Here is the little king of Bretagne!*" See Birch's Negociations, page 113. EDIT.

The king did not shew less firmness on another occasion which likewise regarded the sovereign courts. These bodies assumed the privilege of furnishing immediately but half the sum which the assembly had taxed them with for their contingent, and endeavoured to take a more convenient and more distant time for the payment of the rest: they made the same difficulties about their share of the necessary contributions for the maintenance of those troops which they had demanded themselves. Henry easily comprehended, that they would not have had recourse to this artifice, but to avoid contributing any thing, as soon as he should quit the province: therefore, he sent me word, that it was his will they should furnish the whole tax; which was done accordingly. Their murmurs on account of paying the troops ceased, as soon as they were convinced that the tranquillity of their province depended upon this regulation, and they were the first after that to approve of my conduct.

III. The above orders were sent me from Nantes, to which place the king had advanced, after the treaty with the duke of Mercœur had been agreed upon, to attend to two affairs of importance, namely, the edict for the Protestants, and the reception of the two ambassadors from England and Holland.* His majesty believing his presence in Picardy was necessary to forward the peace, intended to have left Nantes in a month's time, without taking a journey to Rennes, which he had looked upon as useless; and had already given orders for the march of the five regiments of Navarre, Piedmont, the Isle of France, Boniface, and Bréauté, which he drew out of Britanny, to fortify the frontier of Flanders. The king having informed me of his design with respect to these regiments, I represented to him that the probability of a peace being now changed to an absolute certainty, it was necessary to disband part of his troops, and lessen the number of his garrisons, as being a burden too heavy for the kingdom to support, and that two of those regiments were now sufficient for Picardy; accordingly, the two first only were sent thither, under the conduct of the marshal de Brissac. I also insisted so much upon the necessity there was for his majesty to shew himself at least in the capital of Brittany, that, altering his intention, he resolved to come and spend some days there before his return to Paris; and, for that purpose, to dispatch, as soon as possible, the two affairs which detained him at Nantes.

---

* This is an error; the king received these ambassadors at Angers, where they had their first interview on the 21st of March, 159$\frac{7}{8}$. The court did not remove to Nantes till the beginning of April. See Birch's Negociations, p. 105, 141. Edit.

It was now become more necessary than ever, to regulate that concerning the Protestants; this body assumed such a licentiousness of tongue in France, that the king himself did not escape the rage and malignity of their invectives. The remonstrances his majesty had made to the authors of the plot just mentioned, were so far from bringing them back to their duty, that, in appearance, it served only to make them use their utmost efforts to induce the whole Protestant party in their several synods,* to adopt the most violent resolutions: madam de Rohan did not scruple to cabal with many of them, in order to carry, by a majority of voices, the proposal of taking up arms, and forcing the king to receive such conditions as they should prescribe to him; in which attempt she was seconded, with surprising assiduity, by d'Aubigné, remarkable for his satirical turn, and propensity to slander.* It was he who in those assemblies had the boldness to maintain, that they ought no longer to place any confidence in a prince who, together with his religion, had abjured every sentiment of affection, good-will, and gratitude, for the Protestants; that nothing but necessity forced him to apply to them, and treat them with regard; that when this was over, he would have no longer any care about their consciences, liberties, or lives; that the peace with Spain, which was upon the point of being concluded, would plunge the party into the utmost distress, since the sole motive that induced Henry to consent to it, was to unite himself with that crown and the pope, to sacrifice them to their common hatred; and therefore that nothing remained to be done, but to take advantage of the king's perplexity during a toilsome siege,† the distress he was in for money, the need he had of their assistance, and the power which the duke of Mercœur still possessed in Brittany, to obtain by force what Henry would afterwards refuse to grant them.

---

* At Saumur, Loudun, Vendôme, and Châtelleraut: of these we have spoke before, on occasion of the cabals of the Protestant party during the siege of Amiens.

The better to incite the members of these assemblies to a revolt, the Protestants thought the blackest calumnies were lawful. D'Aubigné was not ashamed to represent Henry as a prince to whom all religions were indifferent, and who was only zealous for that which would secure him a throne.* This was the notion he wished to give of his conversion. According to him, the pretended injuries offered to the Protestants left no room to doubt of the new system of politics that Henry had formed for himself. Those injuries opened to d'Aubigné a vast field for exclamation; the least of them were represented as outrages of the most violent nature, and instances of the deepest treachery; and thus, without any regard to the extreme injustice he was guilty of, he placed to the king's account all those hardships which proceeded solely from the Catholics or the court of Rome. The duke of Bouillon, leaving others to declaim, supported d'Aubigné, by his uncommon dexterity in sowing divisions between the king and all those who came near him, whether Catholics or Protestants, and in creating him sufficient employment, that he might not for a long time be at liberty to turn his arms against him. The taking of Mende by Fosseuse, and the fitting out of the count d'Auvergne, were the consequence of these counsels.

---

* He is supposed to be the author of the Confession of Sancy, the Adventures of the baron de Fœneste, and other lampoons.

† The siege of Amiens.

None of these persons neglected to make their court to the ambassadors from England and Holland, as soon as they arrived at Nantes; and they depended so much the more upon drawing them into their schemes, as they were not ignorant, that it was particularly recommended to them to prevent a peace with Spain. These ambassadors were, lord Cecil,† secretary to queen Elizabeth, and Justin de Nassau, admiral of the states: they demanded a private audience of the king; or, if that could not be obtained, at least to have no one present but Lomenie and me. But I was then employed at Rennes.

---

* "There are three things," said Henry IV. "which the world "is very unwilling to believe; and yet, for all that, they are still "true and most certain; namely, that the queen of England died "a maid; that the archduke is a great general; and that the king of "France is a very good Catholic." Journal de l'Etoile, p. 23.

† This was not the secretary himself, whose name was William, but his son Robert. De Thou, liv. cxx. See likewise Chronol.

If the two ambassadors had given credit to the Protestants, all they had to do was to intimidate the king, and force him by menaces to come into their designs; but either this was not in their power, or being convinced of the Protestants injustice, they thought it beneath them to be influenced by their passions; and therefore took no notice to the king of what they had suggested. They had indeed offers to make which were much more likely to prevail with a prince whose inclination for war they were not ignorant of: the English ambassador offered, in the name of the queen his mistress, six thousand foot and five hundred horse, to be maintained at her expense; and Nassau, four thousand foot, and a large train of artillery completely furnished and supplied, besides a particular supply, which they hinted would be very considerable, provided Henry would endeavour to retake Calais and Ardres. In the event of the king appearing inclined to accept these offers, the two ambassadors had orders to conclude a treaty of alliance immediately between France, England, and the Low-Countries, against Spain, and to stipulate that neither of these three powers should listen to any proposal, either for a truce or treaty with the common enemy, but with the consent of the two others.

Septennaire for the year 1598, concerning this interview of Henry IV. with the English and Dutch ambassadors. [With *sir* Robert (not *lord*) Cecil, the queen's principal secretary of state, were joined John Herbert, master of requests, and Sir Thomas Wylkes; the latter fell sick and died at Rouen. See Camden. Edit.]

Happily the king escaped this dangerous snare; and the consideration of the present state of his kingdom had more weight with him than all others. He thanked the ambassadors with great politeness, and introduced his answer by assuring them that, although he could not accept the offers of their sovereigns, yet he would not depart from that friendship which had so long subsisted between them; and that the peace he was going to conclude with Spain (for he did not conceal the terms he was upon with Philip) should not hinder him from keeping up the same correspondence with them as before, nor from supplying them with money, when they had occasion for it, with this only precaution, that these loans should be made under the title of acquittances of debts, to give no pretence for a quarrel with Spain.

He afterwards, with the same sincerity, explained to them all his reasons for putting an end to the war. His kingdom, he told them, was not, like England and Holland, secured by nature from the attacks of her enemies, but open on all sides; his castles unfortified, and destitute of ammunition; his marine weak, his provinces laid waste, and some of them reduced to mere deserts. He went on to give a more particular description of the abuses which had crept into the government, and there introduced a thousand disorders; all subordination being destroyed by the licentiousness that had been practised with impunity amidst the confusion of civil and foreign wars; his power was weak, and unstable, and the royal authority, as well as the most sacred laws of the state, equally disregarded. These evils could only be remedied by a peace; and if that remedy were delayed for ever so short a period, France was every hour approaching to its ruin; the distemper would soon reach the heart, and no human help would then be able to remove it. Henry did not forget to strengthen these arguments, by comparing his present situation, in all these respects, with that of England and Holland, who could engage in a war, on which their safety depended, consistently at the same time with their repose and their interest; and the king drew this parallel with so much clearness and judgment, and so exact a knowledge of the state of those countries, as to make them feel the truth of what he was saying; so that the two foreigners, having nothing to oppose against such convincing arguments, looked upon each other in amazement. The king gave them to understand, that, when he had settled the affairs of his kingdom, he should then, with more assurance of success, renew his former designs against the empire, and the house of Austria; but that these two enterprises were not of a nature to be executed at one and the the same time. The ambassadors, for form's sake, thought they ought to dissuade his majesty from his resolution, but they did it so feebly, being themselves struck with the force of his arguments, that, before the conference was ended, the king brought them over intirely to his opinion, and obliged them to confess, that the peace he was going to conclude was for the advantage of all Europe. They left France soon after, and filled their respective countries with the opinion they had themselves conceived of the great wisdom and extraordinary abilities of the king of France.

In effect, what innumerable miseries would this prince have drawn upon his kingdom, if, following the wild emotions of hatred and revenge, rather than the calm dictates of wisdom and prudence, he had at that instant engaged in a war, which, though in his power to begin, was not to end! How dreadful the consequence, if chance, which arbitrarily disposes of all the events of war, should have favoured the enemies of France! But granting that his arms were victorious, how little preferable to a defeat is that success which a prince must purchase at so dear a rate, as by the alienation of his domains, the anticipating and mortgaging his revenues, the ruin of commerce and agriculture, from whence France derives her chief support, and lastly, by the utter devastation of his provinces! Such evils cannot be balanced by the acquisition of new territories, the possession of which keeps the conqueror in perpetual alarms, and, remaining as so many hateful monuments to the enemy of the ambition and injustice of him who gained them, cherishes and keeps alive those seeds of envy, hatred, and distrust, which never fail sooner or later to produce the same miseries with which the kingdom was before overwhelmed; on this account, I am not afraid to say, that, in the present state of Europe, it is almost equally unhappy for its princes to succeed or miscarry in their enterprises; and that the true way of weakening a powerful neighbour, is not to carry off his spoils, but to leave them to be shared by others.*

---

* It seems necessary to inform the reader here, that nearly the whole of the above, from p. 203, is the substance of a conversation given in the original Memoirs, which the king held with Sully, who himself delivers no opinion whatever on his master's conduct towards England and the states, with respect to the treaty of Vervins. The king certainly adduces some strong reasons for concluding a peace with Spain; but nothing can excuse his duplicity on this occasion, or the violation of the oath which he had solemnly made in 1596, not to conclude a peace without the consent of his allies. It has been said, by some writers, that Henry concluded the peace with the secret approbation of Elizabeth; but for this there seems not to be even

The insolence of the Protestant cabal was totally depressed, when they found that the ambassadors, upon whom they had so greatly relied, were entirely brought over to the king's opinion; and, not doubting but that a peace would now be soon concluded, they thought only of procuring reasonable

---

the slightest foundation. The king throughout the whole negociation appears to have acted towards the queen in a manner wholly unworthy of his great name; in his interviews with the English commissioners, he denied assertions which he knew to be true, and made them promises which he never intended to perform. When they quitted him to return to England, he promised them, that he would not ratify within forty days the articles which his minister at Vervins should sign, within which the ambassadors promised to return with their mistress's pleasure to enter upon the treaty, or retire absolutely: yet in the same letter in which he tells his minister this, he adds, "It was on the 24th or 25th of last "month (April) that I made them this promise, notwithstanding "which, I do not intend to delay *one day* doing my own business, "if that delay can prejudice me: for I have but too much reason "to believe, that this was asked of me, with a view as much to "have opportunity and means of traversing and breaking off the "peace, as to favour it. In short, I will conduct myself in this "point, as I know others would do in my situation, and as shall be "of advantage to my service, which I prefer to every other consi-"deration?" Considering the many and great services which England had rendered Henry, and without which, perhaps, he would never have succeeded to the throne of France, his conduct was certainly most ungrateful and ungenerous. Elizabeth, however, well knew how to resent it: in one of her letters to him after the peace of Vervins, she tells him, "that if in temporal concerns, there "be such a crime as sin against the holy Ghost, it is doubtless in-"gratitude: that if he had obtained advantageous conditions from "Spain, he owed them to England: that he ought not to abandon "his old friend, since a new one was not of equal value; and that "the sacredness of treaties and solemn compacts was never used as "snares, but among bad men." For further particulars on this subject the reader is referred to Dr. Birch's Negociations, (p. 105 et seqq.) where many interesting circumstances will be found in the letters of the English commissioners, respecting their different interviews with the king, and which throw considerable doubt upon much of what is said in the above pages. Edit.

conditions. It was happy for them that, at a time when it would have been easy to punish them for their unjustifiable procedings, they had a prince to deal with whose reason was always stronger than his resentment. Both sides were then very industrious to draw up that famous agreement known by the name of the edict of Nantes, by which the rights of the two religions were afterwards both clearly explained, and solidly established. Schomberg, the president de Thou, Jeannin, and Calignon, were employed to draw it up, of which all I shall say is, that, by this edict, it was provided that the French Calvinists, who, till then, had been only privileged by truces, renewed and continued, should have a fixed and durable establishment.* All that now remained to be done, was to cause this treaty to be registered and confirmed by the parliaments and sovereign courts, and to begin with those of Paris; which was deferred till the king's return to that city.

Having paid what he owed to the Protestants,† according to the exactest justice, the king did not think himself obliged to shew much regard to those who still continued to stir sedition, such as the duke of Bouillon in particular, who had most reason to reproach himself; and for once, he resolved to speak to him like a master: he had now acquired a right to do this, even though we suppose him not to have had it in the character of king. He purposed to execute this design as soon as he arrived at Rennes, and took his rout thither without delay. The duke of Bouillon then lodged at the house of l'Alloué, where he was confined to his bed by the gout; the king went to visit him, and after the first compliments, signifying that it was his pleasure to be left alone with the duke, the rest of the company quitted the chamber, and his majesty desired that he would, without interruption, hear what he had to say to him. He began with a particular detail of all his proceedings, to shew that he was not ignorant of any of them: he dwelt chiefly upon some steps the duke had taken since the edict of Nantes, and which were therefore so much the more criminal, as it ought to have prevented him from entertaining a thought of revolting against a prince who had so generously adhered to his interest. The duke attempted to offer something in his excuse, but he was stopped by the king, who told him, that without any justification, he would from that day forget all that had passed; and since he had pardoned whatever the most inveterate malice had been able to suggest to his enemies, he had no inclination to exclude from his favour an old servant, with whom he had been pleased for a long time: in conclusion, he advised

---

* The edict of Nantes was signed the 13th of April. De Thou says, that the judicial confirmation of it was put off till after the departure of the legate, whom they were loth to send away discontented. The concessions this edict contains, more favourable than those that had been formerly granted them are, that they were admitted to places of trust, both in the courts of justice and in the finances: all the rest is no ways essentially different from the edict of pacification that passed in 1577. Bayle ascribes the honour of composing the edict of Nantes to the reformed minister Chamier. See it in Matthieu, tom. II. book ii. and in several other historians. There were likewise some secret articles, of which the most disadvantageous for the Calvinists is that which forbids them the exercise of their religion in a great many towns and particular districts, as Rheims, Soissons, Dijon, Sens, &c. because Henry IV. had so engaged himself by particular treaties before, with the different chiefs of the league.

† Le Grain mentions a good saying of Henry IV. One day as

---

the Protestants were importunately teasing him with their demands, "Apply to my sister," says he to them, "for your affairs are now "fallen into the hands of women to conduct them."

the duke, with an air of authority, which became him better as he employed it seldom, to make good use of the counsel he was now giving him as his friend, to think no more of his past behaviour, but for the sake of acting in a manner quite contrary; for if he should again fail in his respect to his king and master, he was resolved to make use of that convenience which the peace now established in the kingdom gave, to bring him to punishment: after which the king, without waiting for his answer, went out and left him to his own thoughts.

The inhabitants of Brittany were charmed with the affability of their king, and his complaisance in being present at all the entertainments with which the ladies contended to divert him. Henry divided his time between these assemblies, the sport of running at the ring, balls, and tennis-playing, without lessening his assiduity about the marchioness of Monçeaux, who was very far advanced in her pregnancy.

In the midst of these amusements, the king at certain intervals appeared so pensive and reserved, that it was not difficult to guess some secret uneasiness preyed upon his mind; and I was the more convinced of it when his majesty, who often diverted himself with hunting, ordered me twice to follow him apart, that he might have an opportunity of conversing with me alone; yet when I did so he was silent. I then remembered that the same thing had happened at Saint-Germain, and Angers; and I concluded that he had a design in view, which he had some difficulty to disclose to me, knowing with what freedom I sometimes opposed his opinions; but what this design was I could not possibly guess. Returning from the abovementioned visit to the duke of Bouillon, his majesty being at the foot of the staircase, saw me as I entered the court, and calling me, made me go with him into the garden, which was extremely large and beautiful, holding my hand with his fingers between mine as usual, then ordered the door to be shut, and that no person should be allowed to enter.

This prelude made me expect to hear a secret of great consequence. Henry did not enter upon it immediately, but, as if he had not sufficient resolution to explain himself, began to tell me what had just passed between him and the duke of Bouillon. This conversation was followed by news relating to the negociations of Vervins, which led him insensibly to reflect on the advantages France would receive from a peaceable government. One circumstance, the king said, gave him great uneasiness, which was, that, not having children by the queen his wife, it would answer no purpose to be at so much trouble to procure peace and tranquillity to his kingdom, since, after his death, it must necessarily fall into its former calamities, by the disputes that would arise between the prince of Condé and the other princes of the blood, concerning the succession to the crown. His majesty confessed to me, that this was his motive for desiring, with such ardour, to leave sons behind him. Unless his marriage with the princess Margaret could be dissolved, it was not possible for him to be absolutely happy; but the informations he received from the archbishop of Urbin, messieurs du Perron, d'Ossat, and de Marquemont, his deputies at Rome, of the pope's favourable dispositions in respect to that affair, gave him great hopes of its success: in effect, Clement the Eighth, who was as good a politician as any prince in Europe, revolving in his mind what means were most likely to hinder France, and the other

Christian kingdoms, from falling again into a state of anarchy and confusion, could find none so effectual as that of securing the succession of the crown of France, by authorising Henry to engage in a second marriage which might produce him male children.

Our conversation being fixed upon this subject, it was easy for me to perceive that it was from hence his majesty's uneasiness proceeded; but I could not so soon know what particular circumstance it was that disturbed him. The king began to consider with me what princess of Europe he should choose for his wife, in case his marriage with Margaret of Valois should be dissolved; but indeed he set out with a declaration which shewed any reflections on this head would be fruitless. "That "I may not repent," said he, "of taking so dan- "gerous a step, nor draw upon myself a misfortune "which is with justice said to exceed all others, "that of having a wife disagreeable in person and "mind, it is necessary that in her whom I marry I "should find these seven qualities, beauty, prudence, "softness, wit, fruitfulness, riches, and a royal "birth;" but there was not one in all Europe, with whom he appeared entirely satisfied. "I should "have no objection to the infanta of Spain," pursued Henry, "although she is a little advanced in "years, provided that with her I could marry the "Low-Countries, even though I should be obliged "to restore to you the earldom of Bethune: neither "would I refuse the princess Arabella of England,*

---

* The person here styled "the princess Arabella of England," was lady Arabella Stuart, daughter of Charles earl of Lennox, the youngest brother of Henry earl of Darnley, and consequently cousin-german to James the Sixth. The reports which the king alludes to, of the crown of England belonging to her, were probably raised by the Catholics and Jesuits, who were continually plotting against

"if, since it is publicly said, the crown of England "really belongs to her, she were only declared presumptive heiress of it; but there is no reason to "expect that either of these things will happen. I "have also heard of some princesses of Germany, "whose names I have forgot; but the women of "that country do not suit me: I should always "fancy I had a hogshead of wine in bed with me; "besides, I have been told that France had once a "queen of that country, who had like to have "ruined it: all these considerations have given me "a disgust to the German ladies. The sisters of "prince Maurice have likewise been mentioned to "me; but besides that they are Protestants, which "would give umbrage to the court of Rome and "the more zealous Catholics, they are daughters of "a nun; which, together with a certain reason that "I'll inform you of some other time, has prevented "my entertaining any thoughts of them. The duke "of Florence has a niece who is said to be handsome,

---

Elizabeth, and endeavouring to prevent the succession of James. This lady is said to have been of a mild and unambitious temper, yet from her alliance to the crown, though very remote, she drew upon her the attention of disaffected persons, and to this circumstance is to be attributed the source of many of those miseries which she endured. In 1602, the Jesuits openly declared her the lawful successor of Elizabeth, and attempted unsuccessfully to effect a marriage between her and the duke of Savoy; and the plot discovered soon after the accession of James, usually called Sir Walter Raleigh's plot, was also said to have been contrived for the purpose of deposing the king and raising her to the throne. She fell under the displeasure of James by marrying, without his consent, sir William Seymour, son to lord Beauchamp, from whom the king immediately separated her, confined her to her house at Highgate, and sent sir William to the Tower; they afterwards attempted to escape together to France, but he only was successful, she being taken and confined in the Tower, where she became insane through grief for the loss of her husband whom she tenderly loved. She died in 1615. Edit.

" but she is descended from one of the most inconsiderable families in Christendom that bear the " title of prince, it not being above threescore or " fourscore years since her ancestors were only the " first citizens in Florence; she is likewise of the " same race with the queen-mother Catherine, who " did so much mischief to France, and to me in " particular.

" These," continued the king, observing that I listened attentively to him, " are all the foreign " princesses that I have any knowledge of: of those " within my own kingdom, my niece of Guise would " please me best,* notwithstanding the malicious " reports which have been spread that she loves *poulets* in paper better than in a fricassee; for my part " I not only believe those reports to be false, but " should rather choose a wife who is a little fond of " gallantry, than one who wanted understanding; " but I am apprehensive that the violent affection " she discovers for her family, particularly for her " brothers, would create some disorders in the kingdom."

After this, the king named all the other princesses in France, but to as little purpose: he acknowledged that some were beautiful, and genteel, such as the eldest of the duke of Maïenne's two daughters, although of a brown complexion, the two daughters likewise of the duke of Aumale, and three of the duke of Longueville; but all these were either too young, or were not to his taste. He afterwards named mademoiselle Rohan, the princess of Conti's daughter, of the house of Lucé; mademoiselles Luxembourg and Guémené; but the first was a Protestant, and the second not old enough, and the persons of the two others did not please him: and all, for some reason or other, were rejected. The king closed this enumeration by saying, that although these ladies might be all agreeable enough to him in their persons, yet he saw no way to be assured that they would bring him heirs, or that he could suit himself to their tempers, or be convinced of their prudence, three of the seven conditions without which he had resolved never to marry; since, if he entered into an engagement of that kind, it would be with a design to give his wife a share in the management of all his domestic affairs; and that, as according to the course of nature, he would die before her, and leave children very young behind him, it would be necessary that she should be able to superintend their education, and govern the kingdom during a minority.

---

* Louisa Margaret of Lorrain: she was a very beautiful princess. It was proposed, at the time of the siege of Paris, for her to marry Henry IV. in order to unite the two parties. The sarcastic lampoons of that time charge her with carrying on an intrigue with the duke de Bellegarde, master of the horse: and what Henry says here of *poulets*, is taken from a song that was made against mademoiselle de Guise, which may be seen in l'Etoile, under the year 1596.

Weary at length of endeavouring, to no purpose, to find out what the king aimed at by this discourse, I said, "But what is it you mean, sire, by so many "affirmatives and negatives; and what am I to conclude from them, but that you are desirous to "marry, and yet cannot find a woman upon earth "qualified to be your wife? By the manner in "which you mentioned the infanta Clara Eugenia, "it should seem that great heiresses are most to "your taste; but can you expect that heaven "should raise a Margaret of Flanders, or a Mary of "Burgundy, from the dead for you, or at least restore the queen of England to her youth?" I added, smiling, "that for proof of the other qualities "which he demanded, I saw no better expedient "than to bring all the beauties of France together, "from the age of seventeen to that of twenty-five, "that by talking with them in person, he might "know the turn of their temper and genius; and "that for the rest he should refer himself to experienced matrons, to whom recourse is had on "such occasions." Then beginning to talk more seriously, I declared, that, "in my opinion, his majesty might contract his expectations, by striking "off a great fortune and royal birth, and content "himself with a wife who was likely to keep his "heart, and bring him fine children; but that here "again he must content himself with mere probability, there being many beautiful women incapable of childbearing, and many illustrious fathers "unhappy in their offspring; but that whatever his "children should prove, the blood from which they "sprung would secure the respect and obedience "of the French nation."

"Well," interrupted the king, "setting aside "your advice concerning this assembly of beauties, "with which I am mightily diverted, and your sage "reflection that great men have often children who "possess none of their qualities, I hope to have "sons whose actions shall exceed mine. Since you "confess that the lady whom I marry ought to be "of an agreeable temper, beautiful in her person, "and of such a make as to give hopes of her bringing children, reflect a little, whether you do not "know a person in whom all these qualities are "united." I replied, that I would not take upon me to decide hastily upon a choice wherein so much consideration was requisite, and to which I had not yet sufficiently attended. "And what would you "say," returned Henry, "if I should name one,

" who, I am fully convinced, possesses these three " qualities?" " I should say, sire," replied I, with great simplicity, " that you are much better acquainted with her than I am, and that she must " necessarily be a widow, otherwise you can have " no certainty with regard to her fruitfulness." " This is all that you would desire," said the king, " but if you cannot guess who she is, I will name " her to you." " Name her then," said I, " for I " own I have not wit enough to find out who she " is." " Ah! how dull are you," cried the king, " but I am persuaded you could guess who I mean, " if you would, and only affect this ignorance to " oblige me to name her myself; confess then that " these three qualities meet in my mistress: not," pursued the king (in some confusion at this discovery of his weakness), " that I have any intention " to marry her, but I want to know what you would " say, if, not being able to meet with any other " whom I could approve of, I should one day take " it into my head to make her my wife."

It was not difficult for me to discover, amidst these slight artifices, that his majesty had already thought of it but too much, and was but too well disposed to this unworthy marriage, which every thing he had said tended to justify. My astonishment was indeed very great, but I deemed it necessary to conceal my thoughts with the utmost care: I affected to believe that he was jesting, that I might have an opportunity of answering in such a manner as might make the king ashamed of having entertained so extravagant a notion. My dissimulation did not succeed; the king had not made so painful an effort, to stop there. " I command you," said he to me, " to speak freely; you have acquired the " right of telling me plain truths; do not appre-

"hend that I shall be offended with you for doing "so, provided it be in private; such a liberty indeed, in public, would greatly offend me."

I replied, that I would never be so imprudent as to say any thing in private, any more than in public, that might displease him, except on such occasions when his life, or the good of the state was in question. I afterwards represented to him the disgrace so scandalous an alliance would draw upon him, in the opinion of the whole world, and the reproaches he would suffer from his own mind upon that account, when the ardour of his passion being abated, he should be able to judge impartially of his own conduct. I shewed him that if this was the only means to which he could have recourse to free France from the calamities a doubtful succession would occasion, that he would expose himself to all the inconveniencies he was anxious to avoid, and others still greater: that although he should legitimate the children he had by madam de Liancourt, yet that could not hinder the eldest, who was born in a double adultery, from being, in this respect, inferior to the second, whose birth was attended with but half that disgrace; and both must yield to those whom he might have by her after she was his lawful wife: this bye circumstance making it impossible to settle their claims, could not fail of becoming an inexhaustible source of quarrels and war. "I leave you, sire," pursued I, "to make "reflections upon all this, before I say any more." "That will not be amiss," returned the king, who was struck with my arguments; "for you have said "enough of this matter for the first time." But such was the tyranny of that blind passion, to which he was subjected, that in spite of himself he resumed the discourse that very moment, by asking me if, from the disposition I knew the French to be of, especially the nobility, I thought he had any reason to apprehend they would rise in rebellion, while he was living, if he should marry his mistress.

This question convinced me, that his heart had received an incurable wound: I treated him accordingly, and entered into arguments and expostulations, with which I shall not trouble the reader, since his own imagination may suggest to him all that it was necessary to say upon this subject, which has been already dwelt upon too long. We continued three hours alone in the garden, and I had the consolation to leave the king in a full persuasion of the truth and reasonableness of all I had said to him.

The difficulty lay in breaking those too powerful ties; the king had not yet brought himself to that point: he had many dreadful* conflicts of mind to suffer ere that could be effected; and all he could do for the present, was to defer taking his last resolution till he had obtained the permission he had been so long soliciting from the pope, and till then to keep his sentiments secret. He promised me not to acquaint his mistress with what I had said, lest it should draw her resentment upon me. "She loves "you," said the king to me, "and esteems you "still more; but her mind still entertains some "remains of distrust, that you will not approve of "my design in favour of her and her children: "she often tells me, that when one hears you perpetually talking of my kingdom and my glory, "one is apt to think that you prefer the one to my "person, and the other to my repose." I answered, that against this charge I could make no defence; that the kingdom and the sovereign were to be looked upon with the same eyes: "Remember, "sire," added I, "that your virtue is the soul "which animates this great body, which must, by "its splendour and prosperity, repay you that glory

---

* In this inward struggle, the voice of reason and decorum had not the strongest sway with Henry IV.; and even though M. de Sully does here and elsewhere say it, the world has always been persuaded, upon very good grounds, that, if the death of his mistress, whom he so tenderly loved, had not prevented this prince, he would either have married her, or he would not have married again at all. He was not always directed on this head by the sole advice of the duke de Sully, at least if we believe a very curious anecdote, which may be seen in vol. 9590 des MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi; where it is observed, that Henry IV. being at Saint Germain-en-Laye (this was probably but some months at most after his return from Brittany), he sent for his three ministers (M. de Rosny, de Villeroi, and de Sillery) to consult with them about this so important a question, relating to his marriage; and that the first (who, doubtless, was M. de Rosny) was of the same opinion as is mentioned in this part of his Memoirs: that the second advised him, on the contrary, not to marry, but leave the succession to the prince de Condé, who by birth-right was his true heir; and that at last the third (this was M. de Sillery, the most artful courtier of the three) in oppo-

---

sition to both the former advisers, told him, that the best thing he could do was to marry his mistress, and legitimate the eldest of the children he had by her. Henry IV. (continues the author of this anecdote, who plainly shews himself to be a person to whom one of the three ministers themselves had communicated what passed between the king and them), Henry IV. seemed surprised at this, and afterwards said, "I had promised myself a great deal from "your abilities and fidelity, by the advice I wanted of you with "regard to my marriage; yet still I fear, that instead of having "satisfied me, you have only increased my irresolution by the con- "trariety of your opinions, which are supported with such strong "reasons, that I find myself not a little embarrassed in the judg- "ment which I should make as to the best of them; that "I therefore require a little time to consider of it," &c. and after he had said this, he got up and dismissed them.

" and happiness which it derives from you, and that " you are not to seek happiness by any other " means." After this we left the garden, and, it being night, separated, leaving the courtiers to rack their imaginations in vain to guess the subject of so long a conference.

Neither the king nor I had attended to a circumstance absolutely necessary on such occasions, which was Margaret's consent to the dissolution of her marriage: I conceived it to be highly proper to enter upon this negociation while we expected the success of that which was carrying on at Rome. I was willing first to sound the intentions of this princess; I therefore wrote her a letter on the subject, the substance of which was, that, most ardently desiring a reconciliation between her and the king, upon which France founded her hopes of having a lawful heir to the crown, I thought it my duty to intreat she would authorise me to use my utmost endeavours to effect this reconciliation; but that, if the inclinations of both parties were such as to render this attempt fruitless, or that it should not conduce to the purpose I mentioned to her (a point I was sensible the sterility of this princess would make her secretly agree to) I hoped she would not be offended if I should afterwards take the liberty to persuade her to make a still greater sacrifice, which the state expected from her. I did not explain myself any farther, but after what I had mentioned just before, upon the necessity of giving legitimate children to the crown of France, it was not difficult to guess what I meant by this sacrifice.

The queen took time to deliberate upon a matter of such importance, before she sent me an answer; which I did not receive until five months after I had written to her: it was dated from Usson,* where she usually resided, and was such a one as we could have wished for, prudent, modest, and submissive. Margaret, without explaining herself any more than I had done, upon a separation that was not yet publicly talked of, was contented with substituting, instead of it, an assurance that she would readily submit to the king's will; adding the most candid praises of his conduct, and thanks to me for my solicitude and cares.

The king staid at Rennes but seven or eight days, resolving to set out as soon as possible for Paris, that he might reach Picardy the beginning of May: he took his route through Vitré,† from whence I received orders from him to give a gratuity to the garrison of Rochefort, and afterwards to cause the castle to be razed. From Vitré his majesty coasted along the Loire, and came to Tours, by the way of La Fleche, which he took pleasure in seeing again, it being the place where he had passed part of his time in his youth.

I staid behind him at Rennes five or six days, to put the affairs of the finances in order, pay the troops, settle their departure from Brittany, and their march through the midst of the provinces; after which I came to Tours to the king; his majesty having sent for me upon an affair of great importance. I left him to continue his journey to Paris, where (notwithstanding all the haste he was able to make) he did not arrive till the latter end of May. I was so weary* of the formality of our reception into the great cities, and particularly of the long speeches we were tormented with in every place, that taking a bye-road by le Maine and le Perche, I came alone to my estate at Rosny, where my wife was employed in attending the building of a house, and had narrowly escaped, with all our children, from being crushed to pieces under the ruins of the old edifice, which was first to be demolished. I staid there but a short time, yet, upon my arrival at Paris, I found the king was gone from thence; he had only passed through it, and taken the road to Amiens immediately: this city he thought convenient for corresponding with the plenipotentiaries of Vervins, and likewise for visiting all the fortresses upon the frontiers, to facilitate the evacuation of those which were to be restored to him by the treaty, and to provide for their future security. All this was but the work of eight days, and his majesty was no sooner come to Paris than the treaty was signed.†

---

* This princess, many years before, had at first retired to Agen, and afterwards to Carlat. King Henry III. her brother, had not treated her better than Henry IV. her husband, but persecuted her every where, and at last shut her up in the castle of Usson in Auvergne, where, after his death, she was contented to live.

† I have substituted this word in the place of that of Villeroi, as in the original: there never was a place of that name in Brittany; and, in fact, Henry IV.'s road lay through Vitré.

---

* The king was no less so. L'Etoile relates some very smart repartees of his majesty to these importunate haranguers; one of them tired him with long titles and compellations of honour, and repeating often, "O very benign, O very great, O very merciful, "&c. king." "Add too," says Henry to him, "and very weary." Another having begun his speech with these words, "Agesilaus, "king of Lacedemon, sire," &c. the king, interrupting him, says, "*Ventre, saint-gris!* I have heard a good deal spoken of this Age-"silaus, but he had dined; but, for my part, I have not yet." Having twice told another, that he should cut short his harangue, and seeing that he nevertheless went on tediously, he left him, telling him, "You must say the rest then to master William," meaning the fool that belonged to the court.

† On the 2d of May, 1598, the peace was signed, in the name

The treaty was very clear and plain: the resignation of all the towns and fortresses that Spain possessed in France was almost the only considerable article in it. No difficulty arose concerning the affair of the marquisate of Saluces; the king did not think fit to break off the peace on account of this article, which was looked upon to be of so little importance, that if Savoy should refuse to do justice in it, the king, it was said, might, with very little trouble, seize the whole territory without any obstruction from Spain. Both parties, however, obliged themselves to abide by the pope's* decision of the affair. Here the plenipotentiaries committed an error, which was the cause of engaging his majesty soon after in a war that might have been avoided. I shall take no notice of the rest of those formalities in use amongst them,† and

---

of the king, "by M. Pomponne de Bellievre, knight, lord of Grignon, and counsellor of state to the king, and M. Nicholas Brulart, knight, lord of Sillery, counsellor of state to the king, and president in his court of parliament at Paris. In the name of the cardinal of Austria, having full powers from the king of Spain, by M. John Richardot, knight, chief and president of the privy council of his said majesty, and one of his council of state: M. John Baptiste de Taxis, knight, &c. and M. Louis Verreiken, knight," &c. See this treaty in the *Mémoires et Negotiations de la Paix traitées à Vervins,* tom. II. with an account, in form of a journal, of all that passed between the plenipotentiaries, from the opening of that negociation till the conclusion of the peace.

* What regards the duke of Savoy, who was represented by M. Gaspard de Geneve, marquis de Lullin, and counsellor of state, &c. is at the end of the 24th article, and imports, "that the remainder of the other differences that are between the said most Christian king and the said duke, shall be referred to the judgment of our holy father Clement VIII. to be determined by his holiness within one year. . . . . And matters shall continue in the state in which they are at present," &c.

† There were found the same difficulties as to the substance, and

leave it to others to extol those refined stratagems which in politics are thought the masterpiece of human wit.

The king signed the treaty at Paris, in the presence of the duke* d'Arscot and the admiral of Arragon; the archduke did the same at Brussels, in the name of the king of Spain and his own, before marshal Biròn, on whom the king, to qualify him for this ceremony, had just bestowed the rank of duke and peer of France, a dignity that completely turned his head, and contributed in a great degree to ruin him. Messieurs de Belliévre and de Sillery were likewise present. The duke of Savoy gave his solemn assent to the peace at Chamberry, in the presence of Guadagne Bothéon,† governor of Lyons,

---

the same obstacles as to the formalities that are usually to be met with in such sort of deliberations. They may be seen in the *Lettres de M. de Bellievre et de Sillery*, and in the *Relation*, &c. ibid. These two negociators have been generally commended for the firm and wise conduct which they shewed therein. In their letters, and, among others, in those dated the 7th of April, and 4th of March, they give a particular detail of the motives that induced them to conclude with the agents for the duke of Savoy in the manner which M. de Sully complains of: and all this they did by the particular orders of his majesty, in his letter of April 9, &c.

* Charles de Croy, duke d'Arscot and prince de Chimay; Don Francisco de Mendosa and Cardona, admiral of Arragon. Henry IV. took an oath for the observing of the treaty of peace on Sunday the 21st of June, the cardinal de Florence, the pope's legate, officiating in the most solemn manner. The account is also to be met with, ibid. tom. II. p. 266, of the MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, vol. 9361. Mem. de la Ligue, tom. VI. Mem. de Nevers, tom. II. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. Cayet, and others.

† He is styled, in the oath taken by the duke of Savoy on the 2d of August, " the illustrious lord, William de Guadaign, lord of " Botheon, knight of the orders of the most high and most excel- " lent prince Henry IV. the most Christian king of France and " Navarre, counsellor in his council of state, captain of fifty gens- " d'armes, and his lieutenant-general in the government of the

who was deputed to him by the king for that purpose.

Thus, notwithstanding a league so powerful as that of the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, and all the ecclesiastics of Christianity, did the king of France accomplish his designs,* and crown them with a glorious peace: all those who had been employed in effecting it he rewarded with a royal munificence; and to prevent this measure from alienating Holland from his interests, he sent Buzenval to Amsterdam, to keep up a good intelligence with the States, and to pay the pension his majesty allowed them. It is not possible to reflect on the great abilities of this prince, and his surprising diligence in shewing himself in every part of his kingdom where his presence was the least necessary, without bestowing on him those praises he so well deserves.

" Lyonnois, Forêt, and Beaujolois, ambassador, intrusted and de-
" puted," &c. Mem. et Negociations, &c. tom. II. p. 365.

* The letters which this prince wrote to his two ministers at Vervins, during the time this negociation lasted, confirm this. They are inserted in the Mem. et Negociations, &c. ibid. He says, " that " with one stroke of his pen he had performed more exploits than " he could have done during a long war with the best swords of " his kingdom." It was also said, upon this treaty, that the Spaniards had got the better by arms, but the French by negociation.

BOOK X.

1598 to 1599.

I. Part of the army disbanded. Ordinances respecting grain, the wearing of swords, and further regulations in the finances, the police, public works, &c. Question of the true or false Don Sebastian. Conferences held at Boulogne between Spain and England, but without effect. The dutchess of Beaufort labours with her partizans to be declared queen; the firmness and resolution with which she is opposed by Rosny, who quarrels with her: they are reconciled by Henry. A conversation betwixt the king and his mistress upon that subject.—II. Henry's sickness. Reception of the legate at St. Germain. Labours of Rosny in the finances. Qualities necessary for a statesman. Rosny gives an account of his wealth; his character, his manner of living, &c. The deplorable condition to which France was reduced by the wars. Sums expended for the treaties made with the League. Arrets which were published. Rosny has a dispute with the duke of Epernon: labours with Henry to rectify the abuses in the finances. The abilities of this prince for government. Singular events.—III. Exposition, examen, and artifice, of the last will of Philip II. The archdutchess comes to Marseilles. Opposition of the clergy of France to the marriage of the princess Catherine with the duke of Bar; cardinal d'Ossat's conduct upon this occasion: a conference held between the Catholics and Protestants for the conversion of this princess, but without success: Henry orders the marriage to be solemnised by the archbishop of Rouen: humorous conversations upon this subject.—IV. The clergy and parliament oppose the registration of the edict of Nantz; alterations made in it; assembly of the Protestants; artifices of the duke of Bouillon on this occasion: the edict registered.—V. The affair of Martha Brossier. Gratuities and employments given by Henry to Rosny. The strange deaths of the constable's wife, and of the dutchess of Beaufort: Henry's grief for the loss of the dutchess; Rosny consoles him.

I. Peace brought with it other labours and other cares. The king began by reducing the number of his troops, both French and foreigners: the Swiss were disbanded, except three companies of an hundred men each, commanded by the colonels Galati, Heid, and Baltazar. This reduction was not so complete as I could have wished, and the necessity of the times seemed to require; but my advice on this head was not approved by his majesty: however, if it had been considered that the royal treasure was almost exhausted, and that there was nevertheless an absolute necessity of furnishing money for many occasions so urgent, that new sums were obliged to be borrowed for that purpose, I am of opinion that I could not have been reproached with a sordid and misplaced economy. These sums were to be applied to the fortifying a great number of towns, and the repairing of many buildings, which, by the late disorders of the times, were threatened with approaching ruin, which it was necessary to prevent without delay. Upon surveying the chief rivers of the kingdom, to settle the different claims (a business which was entrusted to four persons of known probity), it was likewise found necesary to raise several works particularly upon the Charente.

Amongst other political regulations which were thought necessary, the king set bounds to that prodigious quantity of grain, which it was usual to send out of the kingdom, and which often exposed France to the greatest inconveniencies from a scarcity of her own produce: by another regulation, all who had no right to wear swords* were forbid, upon

---

* As to the regulation of carrying arms, several persons are of opinion that it would be proper to add some distinguishing marks in the form of the clothes, that might serve to make known in public the different ranks of people.

As to arts and sciences, and the belles lettres, if it be true, and there appears no doubt of it, that it is to the care which has been taken for some years past to cultivate them in Europe, that we owe the difference which may at this day be observed among Europeans, with regard to the softness of their manners, the politeness of their behaviour, their connexion with each other, and the means which a pain of the severest punishments, to appear with them.

Amidst these occupations, polite literature was not excluded from a share of the king's attention. He heard Casaubon mentioned, and upon the reputation of this learned man, he invited him to come to Paris with his family, where he settled him, with a pension which afforded him the means of living as became a man of his character, "who is not called," said Henry, "to govern a state."

I am under a necessity of suppressing here a detail of many events of little importance which occurred about this time, the number of which would be infinite, were I to recount in these Memoirs all

---

more pacific spirit has found out for discussing and terminating, in a less cruel manner, their respective differences: it appears that, by every kind of public motive, independently of that of the glory and particular interest which results from it, a great state ought never to lose sight of this object. After all the care which has been already taken in this kingdom, in order to form and establish a library, museums, and collections of all kinds, that might be worthy of the powerful monarch who rules it, to institute academies where persons apply themselves to improve the arts and sciences; the world expects with impatience to see the design executed that was formed some time ago, namely to accommodate all these different parts a little more to one another, in such a large town as Paris, by bringing them all within the same walls, where one might conveniently find all at once, as books, instruments, printing-houses, and in general, all the necessary implements, together with proper accommodations for lodging the persons appointed and set over to inspect and take care of them; and especially, to see established a tribunal of arts and sciences, consisting of proper persons in the different academies, and paid by his majesty, to make exact trials, and form a precise judgment concerning books, discoveries and productions that might be useful to the public. At first there was an intention to make the square or Place Vendôme serve for this purpose; after this the Old Louvre was pitched upon: but exigencies of state that are still more necessary to be attended to, have always deferred the execution of this project. [This was written in 1745.]

that his majesty said or wrote to me from Fontainebleau, Monçeaux, and Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where he passed the remainder of this year, and where, from time to time, he commanded my attendance to confer with me upon different events which happened. I shall exactly fulfil my former promise, to suppress all that are not in themselves of some consideration; and shall only observe here, that perhaps no minister of state ever found in his prince more attention, or a more fertile genius with respect to all that could promote either the advantage or the mere convenience of a kingdom, than I found in the prince whom I served. Neither peace nor domestic affairs made him neglect to observe what was passing in the other courts of Europe: the question respecting the true or false Don Sebastian* made then a great noise in Europe, and particularly in Spain; he sent la Tremouille† into Portugal, to endeavour if possible to unravel the mystery, that he might not, without full conviction, determine upon the justice or iniquity of the council of Spain, which had begun their measures by causing the supposed king of Portugal to be arrested.

---

* This question seems at present to be pretty well decided, by the authority of far the greatest part of the best historians, who make no doubt but that king Sebastian lost his life in the battle he fought with the Moors at Alcaçar, in 1578; and consequently that this pretended Don Sebastian was but an impostor, supported both at that time and since by the enemies of Spain. See the proofs of this king's death in M. De Thou, book lxv. of which we shall say more in the sequel. France could besides have meddled in this question another way. Catherine de Medicis pretended to have a just title to the crown of Portugal, alleging that she was descended from Robert, son to Alphonsus III. by Maude his first wife, who died in 1262; since which time, she maintained, all the kings of Portugal were no other than usurpers: but as these were points very difficult to be decided, it appears, that she made but little progress in proving her claims.

† Claude de la Tremouille, duke de Thouars, who died in 1606.

Henry, not having yet explained himself concerning those great schemes which he afterwards formed against the house of Austria, he was desirous of acting as a mediator between Spain and England; he therefore proposed a conference to be held at Boulogne[*] between the two crowns, and sent Caumartin and Jeannin to assist at it in his name. It was in vain that I opposed a measure, which seemed to me to be founded in very bad policy; happily, however, this conference produced nothing that had been expected from it. The obstinate hatred these two nations bore to each other gave rise immediately to so warm a dispute about precedency, that they separated before they had even begun to settle the smallest preliminary.

The Jesuits were not more fortunate in their endeavours to take advantage of that article in the treaty of Vervins, by which all French exiles, as well as foreigners, were at liberty to return into France and settle there; the decree of the council which intervened, deprived them of this plea, and they were obliged to make use of other means which, in the end, succeeded better.

The assembly of the clergy which was held this year, and continued part of the following, shared likewise his majesty's attention, as well as the promotion of cardinals. The son of madam de Sourdis[†] was one of the Frenchmen for whom the king procured a hat, although he was too young to be thought worthy of that distinction. Madam de Sourdis owed this favour to her address in obtaining the interest and good offices of the dutchess of Beaufort: this was the title the king's mistress now bore, for which she had quitted that of marchioness of Monçeaux, after the birth of a second son drew from his majesty an increase of tenderness and honours. This lady had for a long time set no bounds to her ambition; she aspired to nothing less than being declared queen of France; and Henry's passion for her, which daily increased, gave her hopes of accomplishing her designs. When she was informed that the king's agents at Rome were commissioned to solicit the dissolution of his marriage with Margaret, and that his majesty was on the point of sending the duke of Luxembourg * to that court with the title of ambassador, to hasten the conclusion of it, she looked upon this as a favourable opportunity; but suspecting the agents, and probably the new ambassador, she cast her eyes upon Sillery, who was already deep in her interest, and whom this last instance of confidence would not fail of binding still closer to her service: she sent for him, and explaining her views to him, set no bounds to the rewards with which she intended to repay his service and devotion. As she knew what was most likely to tempt Sillery, she assured him of the seals at his return from Rome, though at the hazard even of disobliging madam de Sourdis, her aunt and intimate friend, and promised him likewise the post of chancellor, as soon as it should be vacant. At this price Sillery engaged, with all the oaths she required from him, to neglect nothing that might prevail

---

[*] This conference or congress, into which were admitted the states of the United Provinces, was not held till the year 1599, in the months of May and June.

[†] Francis d'Escoublau, cardinal de Sourdis, and archbishop of Bourdeaux, who died in 1628.

---

* Henry de Luxembourg, duke de Piney, who was the last of that branch of Luxembourg.

upon the pope to legitimatize the two children she had by Henry, and to dissolve his marriage with Margaret. This first step taken, few obstacles remained to hinder her advancement to the throne. She easily found reasons to make the king approve of the ambassador she had chosen: the duke of Luxembourg was, only suffered to set out, to be recalled as soon as Sillery should be in a condition to take his place. The dutchess was at no pains to conceal from the court the title with which she had just graced her favourite; she assisted herself in preparing his equipages, and prevailed upon the king to give the necessary orders for Sillery to appear with all that pomp and magnificence, which was necessary to secure the success of his negociation.

The dutchess of Beaufort, at the same time, to prepare the French for that change which she meditated for her children, obtained of the king, who had no less tenderness for them than for the mother, permission that the ceremony of the baptism of the second son she had lately borne him, should be performed at Saint-Germain, where his majesty then was, with the same magnificence and honours which are peculiar, in this ceremony, to the children of France. Though I could pardon in this lady an intoxication in which she was kept by the servile respect the courtiers paid to her children, and the adorations they offered to herself, yet I could not grant the same indulgence to Henry, who was so far from taking any measures to undeceive her, that he gave orders for the baptism of this child, with a readiness that shewed how agreeable the request was to him. I declared my sentiments of this proceeding with great freedom; I endeavoured publicly to oppose the inference which I perceived the courtiers drew, in favour of children so dear to the king, for the succession to the crown. The king himself, after the ceremony, became sensible that he had permitted too much, and told me that they had exceeded his orders; which I had no difficulty to believe. The child was named Alexander,* as the eldest had been named Cæsar; and the court flatterers, by a kind of second baptism, gave him the title of *Monsieur*, which in France no one is allowed to bear but the king's only brother, or the presumptive heir to the crown.

The mistress did not stop here; she began to assume all the airs of a queen, not indeed wholly through her own presumption (for I think she knew herself too well to have dared to indulge such extravagant ideas), but was driven on to take this step by the continual solicitations of her creatures and relations: madam de Sourdis, Chiverny, and Fresne, seconded her so well on their parts, that it became insensibly the public talk of the court, that the king was going to marry his mistress; and that it was for this purpose he was soliciting his divorce at Rome. I was shocked at a report so injurious to the glory of this prince: I went to him, and made him sensible of the consequence of it. He appeared to me concerned, and even piqued at it: yet his first care was to justify madam de Beaufort, who, he positively assured me, had not contributed to the report; though all the proof he had of this was, that she had told him so: he threw the whole blame upon madam de Sourdis, and Fresne, to whom he shewed that he was capable of pardoning a conduct so little respectful to him, since, although he was assured they were guilty, he gave them not the slightest reprimand.

---

* He was styled chevalier de Vendôme. Lady Catherine, sister to the king, and the count de Soissons, were the sponsors at his baptism. He died grand prior of France in 1629.

One circumstance added great weight to the steps I took on this occasion both in public and private. Queen Margaret, with whom the affair of the approaching dissolution of her marriage obliged me to keep up a correspondence by letters, knew as well as the others, what was said and done at court, with regard to madam de Beaufort's pretensions, and wrote to me, that she had not changed her mind with regard to a separation from the king, but that she was so much offended at their intending to give the place she resigned to a woman so infamous as the dutchess was by her connexion with the king, that, although she had at first given her consent without annexing any conditions to it, she was now determined to insist upon the exclusion of this woman; and no treatment whatever should oblige her to alter her resolution. I shewed this letter to the king, who judging by it how much his marriage with his mistress would irritate the best of his subjects against him, began, in reality, to change his sentiments and conduct.

I was of opinion, that if madam de Beaufort were acquainted with the contents of this letter, it might probably produce the same effects upon her. I would not take this trouble upon myself, being unwilling to meet the insolence and rage of a woman, who looked upon me as a stumbling-block in the way of her advancement; but I communicated the letter to Chiverny and Fresne, who immediately informed madam de Sourdis of it, and she, almost in the same moment, the dutchess of Beaufort. But this lady's counsellors were not so easily alarmed; they were very sensible that the design they had undertaken to engage the king in, could not fail of meeting with many difficulties, and they had taken their measures accordingly: the result of their deliberations had been, to hasten, as much as possible, the conclusion of the affair; persuading themselves, that when it was once over they might give it a colour that should make it excusable; or, at worst, matters would be composed after a little murmuring, as always happens when things are without remedy. They knew well the disposition of the French nation, especially the courtiers, whose first law it is to be always of the same mind with the sovereign, and whose strongest passion is the desire of pleasing him. In a word, they thought themselves secure of every thing, provided the king himself did not fail them.

Fresne having drawn up the warrant for the payment of the heralds, trumpeters, and other under-officers of the crown, who had attended at the ceremony of the baptism, it was brought to me, as well as the rest, that I might give my order for its discharge. As soon as I cast my eyes upon this writing, a tender concern for the king's honour made me consider it as a lasting testimony of his weakness, which was about to be handed down to posterity. I hesitated not a moment to return it, and caused another to be drawn up in terms more proper. The titles of *Monsieur, son of France,* and all that could give any idea of this kind, were suppressed, and consequently the household fees reduced to the ordinary rate, with which they were highly dissatisfied. They did not fail to renew their efforts; and in their discontent quoted monsieur de Fresne, and the law by which their claims were regulated. At first I restrained myself before these people, whose bad intentions I well knew: but growing impatient at last, I could not help saying to them, with some indignation, "Go, go; I will do nothing "in it; know that there are no children of "France."

No sooner had these words escaped me, than I suspected that a troublesome affair would be made of it; to prevent which, I went immediately to his majesty, who was walking with the duke d'Epernon in the palace of Saint-Germain: I shewed him the warrant Fresne had drawn up, telling him, that if it were allowed, there needed no more but to declare himself married to the dutchess of Beaufort. "This "is Fresne's malice," said the king, after he had read it: "but I shall take care to prevent it." Then, commanding me to tear the paper, and turning to three or four lords of the court who were nearest him, "How malignant are these people," said he aloud, "and what difficulties do they throw in the "way of those who serve me with fidelity: they "brought a warrant to monsieur de Rosny, with a "design to make him offend me if he passed it, or "my mistress if he refused it." In the state affairs then were, these words were far from being indifferent; they gave the courtiers, who had smiled at my simplicity, to understand that they might possibly be deceived themselves, and that the supposed marriage was not so near as they had imagined. The king continuing to converse with me apart, told me, that he did not doubt but that madam de Beaufort was greatly enraged against me, and advised me to go to her, and endeavour, by solid reasons, to give her satisfaction: "If they will not "do," added he, "I will speak to her as her "master."

I went directly to the dutchess's apartment, which was in the cloister of Saint-Germain. I knew not what notion she conceived of a visit which she found

I began with a sort of explanation: she did not allow me time to go on: the rage with which she was animated not permitting her to choose her expressions, she interrupted me with a reproach that I had imposed upon the king, and made him believe that black was white. "Ho! ho! madam," said I, interrupting her in my turn, but with great calmness, "since you think fit to talk in this manner, I "shall take my leave, but I shall not, however, "neglect to do my duty." Saying this, I left her, not being willing to hear more, lest I should be tempted to say something more severe. I put the king in a very ill humour with his mistress, when I repeated to him what she had said. "Come "along with me," said he, with an emotion that pleased me greatly, "and I will let you see that "women do not wholly possess me." His coach not being ready soon enough for his impatience, his majesty got into mine: and as we drove to the dutchess's lodgings, he assured me that he would never have cause to reproach himself, that, through his complaisance for a woman, he had banished or even disgusted servants who, like me, were only solicitous for his glory and interest.

Madam de Beaufort, upon my leaving her apartment so hastily, had expected to see the king soon after, and during that time had taken sufficient pains to set off her person to the greatest advantage; believing, like me, that the victory which one or other of us must now gain, would be the presage of her good or bad fortune. As soon as she was informed of the king's arrival, she came as far as the door of the first hall to receive him. Henry, without saluting her, or expressing any part of his usual tenderness, said, "Let us go, madam, to your "chamber, and suffer no one to enter but yourself,

" Rosny, and I; for I want to talk to you both, and " make you live with each other upon friendly terms." Then ordering the door to be shut, and that no one should be suffered to remain in the chamber, wardrobe, or closet, he took her hand, holding one of mine at the same time, and with an air which she had good reason to be surprised at, told her, that the true motive which had determined him to attach himself to her, was the gentleness he had observed in her disposition; but that her conduct for some time past had convinced him, that what he had believed to be real was only dissembled, and that she had deceived him: he reproached her with the bad counsels she had listened to, and the very considerable faults they had occasioned. He covered me with praises, to shew the dutchess, by the difference of our proceedings, that I only was truly attached to his person: he commanded her to get so far the better of her aversion for me, as to be able to regulate her conduct by my advice, since, she might depend upon it, his passion for her should never induce him to deprive me of his confidence.

Madam de Beaufort began her answer by sighs and tears; she assumed a tender and submissive air; she would have kissed the hand of Henry; and omitted no artifice which she thought capable of melting his heart. It was not till she had played off all these little arts, that she began to speak, which she did by complaining, that instead of those returns she might have expected from a prince to whom she had given her heart, she saw herself sacrificed to one of his valets: she repeated all that I had said or done to the prejudice of her children, in order to awaken his majesty's resentment against me: then, feigning to sink under the violence of her grief and despair, she threw herself upon a couch, where she protested she was determined to wait for death, not being able to endure life after so cruel an affront. This was almost too much for Henry, he was sensibly touched by so artful a discourse, which he had not expected, and which he was not prepared to answer; but, resuming that courage and virtue so natural to him, he told the dutchess, in the same tone, that she might spare herself the trouble of having recourse to so many artifices on so slight an occasion. On this reproach, she redoubled her tears, exclaimed, that she plainly perceived she was abandoned, and that doubtless it was to augment her shame and my triumph, that the king had resolved to make me a witness of the most cruel treatment that was ever shewn to any woman. This thought indeed seemed to plunge her into real despair. "By heaven, madam," said the king, losing his patience, "this is "too much; I know to what all this artifice tends; "you want to prevail upon me to banish a servant "whose assistance I cannot be without: I declare "to you, if I were reduced to the necessity of "choosing whether I would lose one or the other, "I would rather part with ten mistresses like you, "than one such servant as he is." He did not forget the term valet which she had made use of; and was still more offended, that she had applied it to a man whose family had the honour of being allied to his own.

After many severe expressions, the king suddenly quitted the dutchess, and was going out of her apartment without seeming to be moved at the condition he left her in; probably because he knew her well enough to be assured that all this violence of grief was affectation. As for me, I was so far deceived by it, as to be greatly concerned for her; and was not drawn out of my error till madam de

Beaufort, perceiving the king was about to leave her so much offended, that she had reason to apprehend he would never return again, changed her behaviour in an instant, ran to stop him, and threw herself at his feet, no longer to impose upon his tenderness, but to induce him to forget her misconduct; she began by apologising for this, assumed an air of gentleness and complacency, and vowed she never had, nor ever would have, any will but his. Never was there a more sudden change of scene: I now only saw a woman perfectly agreeable, easy, and complaisant, who behaved to me as if all that had just passed had been but a dream; we were cordially reconciled to each other, and we all separated very good friends.

II. The king being at Monçeaux about the end of October, had some slight touches of a fever, which ended at last in a violent attack;* it was attributed to the disturbance caused by a prodigious quantity of humours, which were discharged by a purge; and as the fever seemed to have wholly ceased, the king thought himself cured, and wrote to me to that effect, observing, however, that his indisposition had left a faintness and dejection upon him which was not usual with him, but that he would endeavour to disperse it by walking, if he could get strength enough. These symptoms were the forerunner of a distemper which a few days afterwards seized him with such violence that he was soon in great danger, and I had the affliction to find him in this condition on my arrival at Monçeaux, with Chatillon and d'Incarville, whom he sent for in the letter I have just mentioned. I thought for a long time that I had only come to see my dear master expire in my arms, for he would not permit me to leave Monçeaux during his illness, and often called me to his bed-side. In one of these moments, when the obstinacy and continual recurrence of his distemper baffled all the skill of the physicians, and this prince himself thought that his last hour was approaching; " My friend," said he to me, " you " have often seen me meet dangers which it was " easy for me to have avoided; you know better than any other person how little I fear death; " but I will not deny that I am grieved to die before I have raised this kingdom to that splendor " I intended for it; or convinced my people, by " discharging them of part of their taxes, and governing them mildly, that I love them as my " own children."

---

* The historian Matthieu speaks of this disorder of Henry IV. in the following manner: "While he was very merry with his mistress and Bellegarde, and laughing heartily at some satirical "verses, he was suddenly seized with a violent fit of purging and "vomiting, which kept him for seven hours together in very great "danger, all that time having a constant desire to drink, and still "throwing up the water while the glass was at his head." Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 277.

At length Henry's good constitution prevailed, and his distemper was removed all on a sudden;* so that the grief into which his danger had plunged us, was followed immediately by the joy for his recovery. He had afterwards a slight relapse, but it was attended by no bad consequence: he sent me word of this at Paris, whither I had returned as soon as I saw him out of danger; and in another letter, dated the 6th of November, 1598, which Schomberg, at his return from Monçeaux, brought me, that his health was perfectly established, except that he had some small remains of that dejection on his spirits of which he had formerly complained, and which he could not get rid of, notwithstanding he followed exactly the advice of his physicians. The sieurs Marescot, Martin, and Rosset, having, upon the news of his illness, hastened to Monçeaux to assist his physicians in ordinary with their advice, he had the attention to cause them to be paid for their trouble, writing to me to give each of them one hundred crowns, and fifty to Regnault his surgeon.

---

* It was during this malady that Henry IV. was very much troubled with a fleshy excrescence, which served as a pretext to the dutchess of Beaufort, to let him know, by means of La Riviere, his first physician, whom she gained over to her interest, that he could, after this, have no more children. Amelot de la Houssaye, num. I. sur la lettre 243 du cardinal d'Ossat.

The king had not yet quitted Monçeaux when the cardinal of Florence, who had so great a share in the treaty of Vervins, passed through Paris, as he came back from Picardy, to return from thence to Rome, after he should take leave of his majesty. The king sent me to Paris to receive him, commanding me to pay him all imaginable honours. He had need of a person near the pope so powerful as this cardinal, who afterwards obtained the pontificate himself; I therefore omitted nothing that could answer his majesty's intentions; and the legate having an inclination to see Saint-Germain-en-Laye, I sent orders to Momier, the keeper of the castle, to hang the halls and chambers with the finest tapestry of the crown. Momier executed my orders with great punctuality, but with so little judgment, that for the legate's chamber he chose a suit of hangings wrought by Jeanne queen of Navarre; very rich, indeed, but which represented nothing but emblems and mottos against the pope and the court of Rome, as satirical as they were ingenious. The prelate endeavoured to prevail upon me to accept of a place in the coach that was to carry him to Saint-Germain, which I refused, being desirous of getting there before him, that I might see whether every thing was in order, with which I was very well pleased: I saw the blunder of the keeper, and reformed it immediately. The legate would not have failed to have looked upon such a mistake as a premeditated design to insult him, and to have represented it as such to the pope. Reflecting afterwards, that no difference in religion could authorise such sarcasms, I caused all those mottos to be effaced.

I had long hoped that a peace would afford me leisure to examine the finances of the kingdom thoroughly: all that I had hitherto been able to do, was only to alleviate the mischief; and far from having been able to dig to the root, so as to eradicate it at once, the different necessities of the state, which always followed each other so close, during the war, made it be looked on as a great stroke of policy to manage the finances without increasing the confusion. It is certain that, upon a closer examination, they seemed tainted with an incurable disease, which could not even be enquired into without the most unshaken courage and invincible patience: the first glance was able to discover nothing but an universal loss of credit, the royal treasury indebted several hundred millions, no means of raising more money, excessive poverty, and approaching ruin; but this very state of despair made it necessary not to delay a single moment undertaking this great work, while several opportunities concurring shewed at least a possibility of success. Every thing was in tranquillity; the pay of the troops considerably lessened, the greater part of the other military expenses suppressed, the king's council weary at length of making useless endeavours to deprive me of any management of public affairs, almost all business was transacted by me; these gentlemen disdained even to come to the assemblies, unless forced thither by their own interest, or that of their relations or friends: in those assemblies nothing was proposed without my approbation, and nothing executed without my consent; the king had no secret he kept from me, nor any authority that he did not occasionly invest me with; all these considerations persuaded me that, if the calamities caused by so many long and cruel civil wars were ever to be repaired, now or never was the time to accomplish it.

I had received from nature a strong constitution, a body able to support* long labours, and a mind capable of great application, a natural propensity to regularity and economy, improved by a particular study of that science during twenty-five years that I was near the king's person; and, if I may be allowed to say it, a passion yet more forcible for honour and virtue; such are the qualities I brought to

---

* The picture which M. de Perefixe gives us of M. de Rosny, altogether agrees with that which we have drawn here. "He had "especially," says he, "a genius suited to the management of the "finances, and all the other qualifications requisite for such a sta- "tion: in fact, he was a regular man, exact, and a great econo- "mist, he was punctual to his word, no ways prodigal, without "any pompous ostentation, not inclined to profuse expense, game, "or women, nor addicted to any thing that did not exactly agree "with a man bred to such an employment; besides, he was vigi- "lant, laborious, expeditious, bestowing almost his whole time on "business and but little on his pleasures: withal he had the happy "dexterity of seeing through such sort of matters, and of unravel- "ing the puzzling perplexities, and untying the intricate knots, "under which the farmers of the finances, when they have a mind "to be knavish, endeavour to conceal their tricks." Part 3. P. Matthieu gives him no less high a character. Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 278. "The king gave him," says Le Grain, "the post of su- "perintendant-general of his finances, invested him with so great "an authority as had never been seen in that office before: in which, "it must be confessed, there wanted a man at that time, who would "be deaf to every other consideration but the king's advantage, "that is, to the public treasure, which it was necessary to restore "to its full vigour; and who would be more rigid than what either "the dignity of some persons, or the respect due to others, would

---

" have endured at any other time; and indeed this great authority " and power, which the king gave him, did, in a little time after, " restore full strength to all the main resources of the state." See the whole of what this writer says, with regard to M. de Sully. liv. vii.

" Henry put," says d'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. v. chap. 3, " the " finances into the hands of the marquis de Rosny, afterwards duke " of Sully, because he found he had a very extensive and indefatigable genius, as also a natural sternness and severity of temper, " which, without regarding the favour of any one, enabled him to " bear the unpleasing irksomeness of rebuffs; and by that means, " he filled the king's coffers, to which the natural disposition of his " master did not a little contribute."

In tom. III. of the Mem. d'Etat de Villeroi, we find the following passage: " This change in the face of affairs, which the said " M. de Sully had introduced into France, which had been brought " to the lowest ebb of distress, rendering it opulent and flourishing " by means of his good management and industry, does sufficiently " testify his abilities. The remonstrances which he made even " against the king's pleasure, and the opposition he maintained " against all the great men, shew his virtue, prudence, and courage. " Even those who envy him say, that he alone was of more use to " the public, and knew its interests better, than all the rest of the " kingdom besides." The manuscript which I quoted in the preface, coincides with this; and further may be added the suffrage of the greatest part of the historians and memoirs of that time, which all agree, that M. de Sully has, in strict justice, deserved the appellation of the most laborious, the most capable, the most upright, and especially the most steady minister that ever was. The severity, rigidness, and haughty carriage, which are almost the only faults with which he has been charged, arose from the last mentioned quality, that no doubt was carried a little to far. We shall have occasion to speak more of it in the sequel: but I thought myself obliged previously to add these testimonies, to the account he gives us of his character and conduct.

the conduct of public affairs; with these, although one cannot avoid committing faults, and those likewise very considerable, yet one may be assured (and experience as well as the success that attended my labours gives me a right to say so) that the revenues of a state are fallen into good hands when a moderate degree of judgment, much diligence and exactness, and still more probity, are qualities remarkable in him who governs them. I dare not assume to myself more likeness than this to the portrait I am going to draw of a good minister of the finances, because, although I have always proposed such a one for my imitation, yet I candidly confess I am far from pretending to set myself up for a model.

It would be the shortest way to say, that a man who is called to the management of public affairs, ought to have no passions; but that we may not wholly destroy the notion of such a being, by reducing him to an impossible and merely ideal existence, it is sufficient to say, that he ought to have such a knowledge of them, as to be able to avoid their influence: he should be sensible of all the meanness of pride, the folly of ambition, the weakness of hatred, and the baseness of revenge. As I intend only to make such reflections as immediately relate to him, I shall not take any notice here of the great meanness of treating people ill, not only by actions but even words, and of never giving orders to inferiors but in the transports of rage, or peevishness of ill-humour, seasoning them with oaths and curses, since, living for the public, he ought to appear affable, and be easy of access to every body, except to those who only come to him with a design to corrupt him; and never to lose sight of this maxim, which holds one of the first places in the affairs of government: That a kingdom ought to be regulated by general rules, and that exceptions only occasion discontent, and produce complaints.

A just knowledge of what is due to rank, and of different degrees of distinction, is so far from being contrary to this maxim, that it is essentially necessary to it, as well for observing those rules of behaviour to persons of different ranks, which the French politeness has established, as to cure himself of the error that his riches and the favour of his king place every other person in a state of subordination to him. An inclination for the fair sex is a source of weaknesses and injustice, which will inevitably carry him beyond the bounds of his duty; a passion for deep play will expose him to temptations a thousand times more difficult to be overcome by a man who has all the money of the kingdom passing through his hands; that he may escape this dangerous snare, I am under a necessity of prescribing to him, that he must have no acquaintance either with cards or dice.

A dislike of fatigue proceeds generally from the same inclinations which lead to voluptuousness, or create effeminacy. A statesman ought in temperance to seek for a remedy against a fondness for splendor, and the delicacies of the table, which serve only to enervate both body and mind. A virtuous man ought to be wholly unacquainted with drunkenness; a diligent man ought to be no less ignorant of what is called high living. As he ought to make his retirement in his cabinet at all times, and at all hours, not merely supportable, but pleasing, he cannot be too careful to prevent his mind from running on the delights of balls, masquerades, and other parties of pleasures; in all these trifling amusements there is a nameless inchantment, that intoxicates the hearts of philosophers and even misanthropes. The same caution is necessary against hunting, keeping many servants, equipages, furniture, buildings, and all other occasions of expense that luxury has invented. A taste for any of these things soon degenerates into a kind of passion, of which the waste of time is not the only bad consequence; prodigality, ruin, and dishonour, are the usual effects of it: it belongs only to a man who cannot resolve to live and amuse himself with his own company, to think continually of galleries, columns, and gildings, and to run all his life after statues, antiques, and medals. Do you learn to be contented with a common picture; the delicacy of procuring, at a great expense of money and anxiety of mind, original and other scarce pieces, proceeds wholly from an affectation of taste.

I am, however, far from carrying the severity of these maxims so far, as to forbid a man, invested with a public employment, from paying any attention to his own ease; or to deny him all kinds of amusement. I would have him indulge himself in moderate pleasures, and take care of his fortune, provided that he does the one without dissipation, and the other without dishonour. It is one of those advantages which attend a disposition not prone to expense, and fond of regularity, that he who is possessed of it, if he lives long, finds himself insensibly in affluent circumstances. To have made a fortune, a phrase that has so hateful a sound, because, when it is applied to a man of business, it commonly means nothing but injustice, oppression, and cruelty, and when applied to a courtier, nothing but mean artifices, despicable flattery, cringing servility, and even sometimes knaveries and treachery, is nothing more than a natural consequence, and even an act of virtue, where all see that the fortune is only the reward of labour, or an honest recompense of good actions: that I may not be mistaken, I will add, that this ought to appear so clearly as to force our greatest enemies to see it and confess it.*

It ought therefore to be an established rule, that every man who undertakes the management of the finances, or any other part of the ministry, should make, and renew from time to time, a kind of acknowledgment of the state of his income; that is, upon his entrance into the ministry he should draw up an exact and particular memorial of his present possessions, and upon his leaving it give in another in the same form; so that whatever alterations have happened in his fortune may be known to others as well as himself. I have already taken care to give the public an account of every augmentation of my fortune, and each new dignity that was conferred upon me, according to the different periods of time when they happened, and I shall still continue this method: but as I look upon this affair to be subject to calculation, I am going to put every one into a way of doing it himself, and shall shew it completely done at the end of these Memoirs.

My father's estate being equally divided between me and the other only surviving brother I had, my share of it, joined to my wife's fortune, which was ten thousand livres, amounted only to fifteen or sixteen thousand livres a year; and as it increased but very little during five and twenty years, when the king had no means of rewarding his servants, this was my whole income when the revenues of the state were committed to my care. I am sensible that there are many persons who would blush to make such a confession; but for my part I have already said, that in this respect I see only one thing that ought to occasion a blush, which is, the infamy of possessing riches either evilly or doubtfully acquired: I have neither the reproach of extortion, confiscation, or unwarrantable profits to apprehend; all that I added to my first fortune arose merely from the king's bounty to me, so that I owe all to one God, and one master.

---

* A great part of the maxims which fill up chap. 8. part 1. of the political testament of the cardinal de Richelieu, which treats both of the council and counsellors of the king, is evidently taken from this and many other places of M. de Sully's Memoirs; and chiefly what he says of the four qualities requisite to constitute a perfect counsellor, namely, capacity, fidelity, courage or resolution, and application. I shall have occasion in what follows to make some remarks upon that which seems overstrained in the maxims and manners of M. de Sully, with regard to what is called luxury.

What I had been able to add to my fortune till the present year, 1598, amounted to the following sums; an appointment of two thousand livres a year as counsellor of Navarre; the same sum as counsellor of state, with a pension of three thousand six hundred livres, which the king annexed to this post: my salary as member of the council, having been augmented by degrees, and in proportion to the services the king found he received from me, was, at this time, brought to twenty thousand livres: his majesty doubled my company of gensdarmes, which at first only consisted of fifty men, and after it was incorporated with that of the queen, of which I was made captain-lieutenant, the pay amounted to five thousand livres: the king made me likewise honorary counsellor of the parliament of Paris,* but without any income. It was at this time, that Chauvelin the younger had the first dispensation that had been granted from the rule of forty days, paying for it four thousand crowns. I shall make but one article of the government of Mante, which had been just then given me, and that of Gergeau, which I had afterwards. Such was the state of my fortune at that time; the course of it, till then extremely slow, became very rapid the following years, by the great offices with which his majesty honoured me, and by rewards so considerable, that when I collect them together they will make one of the most important articles. I shall include in it his smallest presents, and even those which I received from other royal persons. Before I enter into the discussion of affairs, and an account of the finances which I have promised, since I have begun to inform the public of my personal character, I will finish the picture by giving a detail of my public employments, and my whole manner of living, after I was in a public employment: this is the proper place for it, although, in order to say all upon this head at onetime it is necessary I should suppose myself possessed of all those posts which were not given me till some time after.

---

* The letters patent by which Henry IV. made the marquis de Rosny an honorary counsellor, and thereby gave him a privilege of sitting in the parliament, &c. is dated March 16, 1602, and may be seen in the registers of the parliament of Paris; as also the enrolment

Six days in the week a council was held both morning and evening; the first and most important was called the council of state and the finances, which took up the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, by sitting both in the morning and afternoon; the king was the head of it, and was generally present. The dukes and peers, the officers of the crown, the knights of the king's orders, or those who had a warrant from his majesty, had a seat and a voice in the consultations: here were received and ex-

---

of these letters, and his admittance accordingly on the 19th of March the same year.

amined all kinds of petitions on whatever occasion, but especially those relating to the pensions of state, which from this time began to be paid with a punctuality that made them be preferred to every establishment, and even to landed estates. The three other days of the week were likewise taken up morning and evening with different councils, which were called privy councils, composed of a certain number of particular counsellors, where examinations were held of things properly referred to each of these councils: if there was any controversy, it was dispatched to the courts of justice, to whose cognizance it belonged; and care was taken that justice should be done impartially and speedily. I was a member of each of these councils, and commonly presided in them when the king was not present, which often happened, especially in the privy councils. I never failed to be at the council of state, the whole business of which lay upon me: all the letters and petitions that were to be presented there were addressed to me; and as the questions that require general deliberations are not very common, it often happened, that in communicating the affair, I delivered likewise the resolutions to be taken; and often carried thither arrêts ready drawn up, that every thing might be dispatched at one sitting; and it happened but very seldom that alterations were made. I have always laid it down as a rule, that the answers which are given for regulating the conduct of persons employed in great affairs, cannot be too expeditious, or too distinct; all the time that is spent in debate is lost.

It may be easily imagined how much time these employments demanded: I accustomed myself to rise at four o'clock in the morning, both in winter and summer; and the two first hours were taken up in putting in as much order as possible those affairs which were to be each day brought under consideration: a minister who acts otherwise will leave all things in confusion and perpetual disorder, by the different perplexities he will find himself involved in at last. At half past six I was dressed, and ready to attend the council, which began at seven, and generally ended at nine, or, according to the importance of the business that was transacted in it, at ten, and sometimes, eleven o'clock. It often happened that his majesty, instead of coming to the council, would send for me at nine or ten o'clock, when it was over, and either alone, or with his two other ministers of state,* Villeroi and Sillery, walk with us, acquaint us with his intentions, and give each of us orders relating to our particular employments: from thence I went home to dinner.

My table generally consisted of ten covers; and being served with a moderation that was not approved of by the lords of the court, especially the epicures, who make a serious affair of refining upon every thing that is eat or drank, I seldom invited any persons to dine with me; so that my table was usually filled only with my wife and children, or at most with some friend who was not more difficult to please than myself. Frequent attempts were made to alter my conduct in this respect, but I always replied to any reproaches of that kind, in the words of an ancient, that if the guests were wise there was sufficient for them; if they were not, I could suffer the want of their company without regret.

---

* So were those then called, who have since been named secretaries of state: and such as were named secretaries of state, as M. Forget, M. Lomenie, M. Beaulieu-Rusé, and M. Potier, were properly no more than four secretaries of the finances, or his majesty's first clerks. Though it appears that none of the three hath been called prime minister of state, yet so unequally was the distribution of the functions of the ministry made between M. de Sully and his two colleagues, and so great a share, and so much authority did Henry IV. gave the first in what belonged to their province, that we may say he was, in reality, prime minister, only that he had not the name: this title was not at that time much in use; for the chancellor du Prat, under Francis I. the constable de Montmorency, under Henry II. &c. did not bear it, though they solely possessed the confidence of their masters. M. de Villeroi was at the head of foreign affairs, having also the president Jeannin for his collegue. M. de Sillery and Bellievre, who became chancellor some little time after, had the management of all domestic affairs.

When dinner was over, I went into my great hall, where it was known that I regularly gave audience, and it was therefore at that hour always full: every one was admitted, and had free audience; the reply was no less speedy: herein my particular taste agreed perfectly with his majesty's intention. I began with the ecclesiastics of both religions: the country people, who remained last, were kept but a little time in expectation. I took care to dispatch every one's business before I retired; and even sent for those who, by loitering in the court or the garden, had suffered the hour to slip. If the affair that was proposed to me was equitable, and depended upon me, I promised in two words the execution of it; if otherwise, I civilly chid the proposer, and honestly forbore to meddle with it: if it appeared doubtful, or complicated, I called an intendant, or one of my secretaries, to whom I gave the papers that led to an explanation of it. And such was my management, that the affair was totally dispatched within a week, if I had promised it; and let the business be ever so much perplexed, the council before whom it was laid always decided it within the month.

As to the other councils, which were held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, I assisted at them likewise as long as I could, before the increase of my employments had likewise increased my business, and even afterwards; but when the direction of the marine, artillery, fortifications, buildings, bridges, and causeways, were entrusted to me alone, to which must be added the affairs of my governments, I was obliged to apply to these matters in the place of the other; and to devote the mornings of these three days to the dispatch of business relating to these offices, because his majesty thought them of consequence enough, especially that of surveyor-general of the highways, and superintendant of the fortifications and works, to be present at the clearing the accounts of each of these bodies of people, which was done in the presence of the governors and other officers, who were all called together on such occasions: notwithstanding this, I did not neglect the other councils, but took care to be present when any important affair was debated, especially when it related to war.

I regulated my time in such a manner, that I had still leisure enough for those other affairs, and also for many more which I have not yet mentioned. The extraordinary and unforeseen business I was engaged in, the conversations I had with his majesty, the orders and letters I received from him, may be imagined by a general declaration, that this prince not only informed me of whatever happened to him, but also entrusted me with his most private concerns,* his secrets, designs, reflexions, hidden distempers, pleasures, domestic uneasinesses, fears, hopes, amours, friendships, and disgusts; in a word, all was confided to my fidelity and discretion, terms which I am justly entitled to make use of. In all these moments, in order to comply with the king's desires and occasions, there was an absolute necessity to lay aside the most pressing business, to invent schemes, to go upon private errands, answer letters, and undertake journies; by all which, the affairs of the state would have been injured, if, by giving the night as well as the day to these accidental employments, which were not regulated by months, days, or hours, an extreme diligence in resuming those affairs that had been interrupted by them, had not restored every thing to its proper state.

---

* "Never had any minister the confidence of his master more "entirely than this had: and never was any more worthy of it, on "account of his fidelity, activity, continual application to business, "and disinterestedness in every thing that related to the king's "service," &c. Hist. de France de Chalons, tom. III. p. 255.

One is surprised, in making these reflexions, how with such an exact economy of time, there should remain so little for affairs merely domestic: the few moments I could spare for them I was never able to find but in one of the afternoons of those same three days; and these I snatched by intervals. It was necessary therefore that my wife should accustom herself to do all that I was not absolutely obliged to do; otherwise I must have relied upon people of business, or upon my domestics.

As to amusements, and hours of ease and refreshment, which were necessary to soften the fatigue of such extreme application to business, they were regulated with as much exactness as my most serious affairs; but, like them, subject to frequent interruptions: when, by good fortune, this did not happen, I had no occasion to go out of the Arsenal to find them; for it was in this castle that I resided from the time I was made master-general till the death of my king, which gave me up to the tranquillity of a private life. The exercises of the Arsenal, which was an excellent school for young people, gave the greatest relief to my mind, especially when I saw my children, my son-in-law, my relations and friends, mingled together: the good company which appeared in the afternoon at that little rendezvous, the exultations which were often heard, the air of gaiety without effeminacy, and of pleasure without negligence, which appeared there, is, of all things which I know, most proper to relieve a mind to which, by long habit of labour, all the amusements of mere idleness have been made insipid. In whatever manner I spent the afternoon, when the hour of supper arrived I ordered all my doors to be shut, and no person to be suffered to enter, unless he came from the king. From this hour, till I retired to bed, which I always did at ten o'clock, there was no longer any mention of business, all was ease, mirth, and social joy, among a small number of good and agreeable friends.

The office of prime minister, though at all times laborious, is not always loaded with the same difficulties; and the good fortune of those is to be envied, who are called to it at a conjuncture when the whole stream of affairs having for many years run on in a calm and regular course, they have nothing to do but sit quietly at the helm, content themselves with a general inspection, and leave the rest to be performed by that great number of persons who act under their orders. This advantage I never enjoyed, as may be perceived by what I have had occasion to say at different times; and, not to touch yet upon the affairs of the finances, which was at this time an ocean without bottom or shore, I desire the reader just to cast a look upon the different perplexities which must be met with, without examining foreign affairs; a cabal of disaffected people to watch narrowly, and, if possible, to break; a religious dispute to terminate, a powerful party to satisfy, and a general subordination and scheme of government to establish, and cause to be observed. Things were in such a state, that of all those officers of war, of police, of the finances, judicature, and the king's household, of pensioners, and those who received salaries from the state, nothing more was known than that their number was infinite, and that there was a necessity for learning their names, and marking them all in a register, in order to suppress part of them.

The military affairs were in the utmost disorder, and the regulation which might be introduced, did not depend, as will probably be supposed, on disbanding part of the troops; there was a necessity for surveying all the towns and fortresses, most of which were so near destruction, that on this account, as well as to lessen the number of garrisons that were kept up in France, those which were useless were to be demolished; which however could not be done till after the death of those persons from whom it would have been dangerous to take away the governments of them.

The marine alone might have occupied a minister for a great number of years; for this part of the state, which requires so much application, does not make a very rapid progress; it can be derived only from that quiet and splendor which a kingdom gains by peace and a good government.* It is not to be imagined to what a degree the marine, and the commerce that depended on it, had been neglected in France. I agreed with the king, that this establishment should be begun at the foundation; that the sea-coasts should be visited, and the ports examined, in order to take measures for repairing them; that the same ought to be done with those few disabled vessels and galleys which were yet to be found, till new ones could be built; after which, officers should be appointed, and sailors and pilots sought for, who might be stimulated to industry by rewards: in a word, to spare a longer detail, that an absolutely new marine should be created.

---

* "A nation must be very powerful," says cardinal Richelieu, after M. de Sully, "to pretend to this inheritance (the possession "of the sovereignty at sea), the titles to it being founded more in "force than in reason." Testament politique de ce cardinal, part. II. chap. ix. § 5, 6. Cardinal d'Ossat, in several of his letters, advises Henry IV. to put his marine on a new footing.

All this could not be performed but by degrees, and by a little at a time. The finances being that part of the body of the state which was most diseased, required assistance first: the greatness of the evil may be imagined, by an inventory of the sums which were drawn from the exchequer to bring over the chiefs, and other principal members and cities of the league to the king's party. This statement has something curious enough; it amounted to more than thirty-two millions of livres, and is as follows:*

To the duke of Lorrain and other persons comprehended in his treaty, three million seven hundred and sixty-six thousand eight hundred and twenty-five livres: to the duke of Maïenne and others comprehended in his treaty, together with two regiments of Swiss, which the king took upon himself to pay, three million five hundred and eighty thousand livres; to the duke of Guise and others comprehended in his treaty, three hundred and eighty-eight thousand livres: to the duke of Nemours and others, three hundred and seventy-eight thousand livres: to the duke of Mercœur, for Blavet and other towns of Brittany, four million two hundred and ninety-five thousand three hundred and fifty livres: to the duke d'Elbœuf, for Poitiers, &c. nine hundred and seventy thousand eight hundred and twenty-four livres: to messieurs de Villars and the chevalier d'Oise, for Rouen and Havre, comprehending likewise the indemnifications granted to the duke of Montpensier, marshal Biron, the chancellor, &c. three million four hundred and seventy-seven thousand eight hundred livres: to the duke d'Epernon and others, four hundred and ninety-six thousand livres: for the reduction of Marseilles, four hundred and six thousand livres: to the duke of Brissac, for Paris, &c. one million six hundred and ninety-five thousand four hundred livres: to the duke of Joyeuse, for Toulouse, &c. one million four hundred and seventy thousand livres: to monsieur de la Chatre, for Orleans, Bourges, &c. eight hundred and ninety-eight thousand nine hundred livres: to messieurs de Villeroi and d'Alincourt, for Pontoise, &c. four hundred and seventy-six thousand five hundred and ninety-four livres: to monsieur de Bois Dauphin, and others, six hundred and seventy-eight thousand eight hundred livres: to monsieur de Balagny, for Cambray, &c. eight hundred and twenty-eight thousand nine hundred and thirty livres: to messieurs de Vitry and de Medavy, three hundred and eighty thousand livres: to the sieurs Vidame d'Amiens, d'Estournelle, marquis de Trenel Sesseval, du Pêche, Lamet, &c. and for the cities of Amiens, Abbeville, Peronne, Coucy, Pierrefont, &c. one million two hundred and sixty-one thousand eight hundred and eighty livres: to the sieurs de Bellan, Quionville, Joffreville, Du-

---

* Here the old Memoirs have an error, in the calculation, of about one hundred thousand livres.

Péche, &c. and for Troyes, Nogent, Vitré, Chaumont, Rocroy, Chateau-Porcien, &c. eight hundred and thirty thousand and forty eight livres: to messieurs de Rochefort, and for Vezelay, Macon, Mailly, &c. four hundred and fifty-seven thousand livres: to messieurs de Cannillac, d'Achon, Lignerac, Monfan, Fumel, &c. and for the city du Puy, &c. five hundred and forty-seven thousand livres: to messieurs de Monpezat and de Montespan, &c. and for different cities of Guienne, three hundred and ninety thousand livres: for Lyon, Vienne, Valence, and other, cities of Dauphiny, six hundred and thirty-six thousand eight hundred livres: to the sieurs Daradon, la Pardieu, Bourcanny, Saint-Offange, for Dinan, &c. one hundred and eighty thousand livres: to the sieurs de Leviston, Baudoin, and Beauvilliers, one hundred and sixty thousand livres.

I should terrify my readers were I to shew them that this sum made up but a small part of that which was demanded from the exchequer both for the French and foreigners, under the title of pay, pensions, loans, arrears, &c. and that the total of all these sums, after making some deductions, amounted, by the computation I made, to near three hundred and thirty millions of livres: this calculation I would lay down here, but that I think it will appear more properly when all these particulars come to be discussed.

Here was a large field laid open for the labours of a superintendant of the finances; but the difficulty was, where to begin; the exorbitancy of the national debts demanded an increase of the taxes, while the general poverty required a diminution of the old: and every thing being well considered, I even found it for the interest of the sovereign, that the cries of the public misery should be heard. It is not possible to give a just idea of the dreadful condition to which the provinces were reduced, especially those of Dauphiny, Provence, Languedoc, and Guienne, the theatres of long and bloody wars and outrages, by which they were wholly exhausted. I granted throughout the whole kingdom a remission of the remainder of the imposts of 1596, which were yet to pay;* an act that necessity, as well as charity and justice, demanded. This gratuity, which gave the people time to breathe again, was the loss of twenty millions to the king; but it facilitated the payment of the subsidies of 1597, which would otherwise have been morally impossible.

After this relief, I endeavoured to procure the country people as many more favours as I was able: being strongly persuaded, that it could not be the sum of thirty millions, which was raised every year in a kingdom so rich and of such extent as France, that could reduce it to the condition I now saw it in; and that the sums made up of extortions and false expenses, must certainly infinitely exceed those which were brought into his majesty's coffers, I took my pen, and resolved to make this immense calculation. I saw, with a horror which gave new force to my zeal, that for these thirty millions that were given to his majesty, there were drawn from the purses of the subjects, I almost blush to declare it, one hundred and fifty millions:† the thing appeared to me so incredible that I could not believe it, till with great industry I convinced myself of the fact. After this, I was no longer ignorant from whence the calamity of the people proceeded, at a time when, although commerce was interrupted, industry stopped or persecuted, the arms neglected and without value, and every other kind of wealth diminished in proportion, they had been obliged to furnish a sum so much beyond their abilities, which had been forced from them with the utmost violence.

---

* Together with the arrears of preceding years, for which individuals had given their bonds to the receivers of the taxes; some of which bonds, according to le Grain, liv. vii. being seven years behind, were declared null and void.

† This sum, exorbitant as it is, will not, however, appear exaggerated, if we consider that besides the ordinary expenses of levying it, which were at that time excessive, the people had still a great

I then applied my cares to the authors of this oppression, who were the governors, and other military officers, as well as the civil magistrates and officers of the revenue; who all, even to the meanest, abused, in an enormous degree, the authority their employments gave them over the people: and I caused an order of council to be drawn up, by which they were forbid, under great penalties, to exact, without a warrant in form, any thing from the people, upon what title soever, beyond what they were obliged to on account of their share of the tailles and other subsidies settled by the king; the treasurers of France being enjoined to give information of all contrary practices, on pain of being answerable for them themselves.

---

number of other impositions and exactions to bear: "For France "would become too rich," sys cardinal Richelieu, Test. Pol. part "II. chap. 9. § 7. and the people be in too flourishing a condition, "if the public money, which other states expend with economy, "were not squandered with prodigality here. She loses more, in "my opinion, than those kingdoms which pretend to rival, her lay "out in their ordinary disbursements." Upon this he relates a good saying of a Venetian ambassador; viz. that to render France happy, he wished no other, than that she knew as well how to expend the money she squandered without reason, as his republic knew never to spend one single farthing without occasion and the greatest economy.

This order was a check to the greediness of all these petty extortioners, but it raised a furious resentment in them against me; and notwithstanding there was something shameful in expressing it, yet many of them made loud complaints of me, as if I had in reality stripped them of their lawful possessions. The duke d'Epernon was the first who explained himself on this head, and ventured to quarrel with me about it: the humiliation he had suffered had not lessened the fierceness and insolence of his temper. The Provençals had often blessed the moment when he quitted their province: no people could be more miserable than his vassals, and those who were too near neighbours to his lands; he raised every year at their expense, a revenue of above sixty thousand crowns.

The members of the council, to whom this order gave as much pain as to the duke d'Epernon, informed him of the day when it was to be passed; and he flattered himself he should be able to prevent it. Accordingly he came and took his seat in the council,* and addressing himself to me, made a comparison, with great arrogance and contempt, of the manner in which he supported the honour of his name, with that in which I disgraced mine, by

---

* The quarrel which is here spoken of happened on Monday the 26th of October, 1598, at the chancellor's, where the council was held. "The duke d'Epernon having told M. de Rosny that he was "not obliged to wait upon him at his house, valuing his quality "at a very high rate; the latter made answer, with an air of rodomontade, That he was descended from one of the oldest "families in France. Yes, Sir, replied the duke d'Epernon, if you "will allow that there is some difference betwixt you and me. "Having mentioned his sword, and taken occasion to raise the "profession of arms above all others, M. de Rosny returned, "That he likewise had a sword, and knew how to use it. To "which the duke d'Epernon replied, That he did not doubt that. "The chancellor then interposing pacified them: whereupon they "began to talk a little more coolly; when M. de Rosny, resuming "the discourse, said to him, Sir, you have treated me as if I were

" some petty tax-gatherer. No, replied the duke d'Epernon, you " will find, that I am not come hither to give you any opprobrious " language. I am not a person to be used so, says M. de Rosny, " interrupting him: such treatment I would not bear from any " man alive. I did not intend any affront, says the duke d'Epernon. " I am glad, returns M. de Rosny, affecting to take his antagonist's " last words as an apology, that you did not affront me. I give " nobody any affront, replied the duke d'Epernon; and were even " that the case, I carry about me what will give satisfaction to persons of my own rank, and to others according to their stations. " It was probably, after these last words, which were very provoking, that both of them clapt their hands to the hilts of their " swords. The chancellor and the other councellors had often interposed, and at length parted them." The 8055th volume of MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, from which I take these particulars almost word for word, relatès them, with some other similar circumstances, to show the hasty and proud temper of the duke de Sully; and at the same time the whole of this account is given us in such a manner as is not at all favourable to him. Le Grain also alludes to this fact in what I am going to quote. But though he agrees, that a minister ought above all things, to have a great regard for moderation, yet he cannot forbear justifying M. de Sully; " How was it possible," says he, " that he should retrench so many " pensions and salaries of officers who did no service for them, " refuse so great a number of persons that pressingly claimed and " demanded rewards, and have a watchful eye over the many " counsels that were given the grandees of the kingdom, which " counsels he often turned to the king's advantage, and to their " great dissatisfaction, without being invested with a very extensive authority, and shewing at the same time a lofty supercilious " carriage? The king too would have it so, to the end that all " might be on an equal footing, till he had discharged his duty " towards his kingdom, and enriched it: for which reason subjects " ought not to murmur. And in as much as the king testified his " approbation of all M. de Sully's actions, when his majesty " declared to some of the great ones that wanted to quarrel with " him, that he himself would be his second; we are not at liberty to " canvass such proceedings, nor injure his majesty's memory after the new trade I had taken up. To this impertinence I replied without any equivocation, by declaring to him, that every way I thought myself at least his equal. This plainness threw d'Epernon into a rage, instead of that insulting calmness he had affected at first; and he proceeded to menaces, which I heard with no more patience than the rest. I answered him with great spirit: he replied in the same manner: and, without further explanation, each of us laid his hand on his sword. If the persons who were present had not thrown themselves between us, and forced us to quit the council at opposite doors, a very extraordinary scene would have been acted in the place where this debate happened. Our quarrel being related to the king, who was then at Fontainebleau, his majesty was so well pleased with the zeal which I shewed on this occasion for justice, that he wrote to me that same hour with his own hand, and praising my conduct, offered to be my second against d'Epernon, to whom he said he would speak in such a manner, as to prevent him for the future from giving me any more insults of that kind. D'Epernon finding the king was greatly offended with him for this proceeding, asked my pardon in the presence of his majesty, who obliged us to embrace each other.

Besides those revenues which the princes of the blood, with the king's sister at their head, and the

---

" his death, nor the duke de Sully's honour during his life, seeing " he did nothing but for the service of his master.—God grant," adds this writer, after shewing the wisdom and necessity of the king's conduct, and that of his minister, " that this treasure may be pre- " served with the same care that it has been acquired," liv. vii. I thought this remark necessary to be made, as in the sequel of these Memoirs I shall adduce a great many other examples, like the dispute we have just now seen mentioned.

officers of the crown, had contrived for themselves, the people were farther incommoded by the manner of their collecting the revenues. There was not one of these persons who was not a pensioner of the king, under the title of their employments, rewards, gratuities, or treaties made with his majesty on their returning to their obedience to him; and, by an effect of the licentiousness of the past times, it was customary for these officers, instead of addressing themselves to the treasurer of the exchequer for the payment of their pensions, to pay themselves out of the produce of the farms upon which they had assignments; some upon the *tailles*, some on the excise, others upon foreign commodities, the crown lands, five large farms, escheats, tolls of rivers, *comptables de Bourdeaux*, patents of Languedoc, Provence, &c. The king had no other means of paying more considerable debts which he had contracted with foreign princes, namely, the queen of England, the count Palatine, the duke of Wirtemberg, the duke of Florence, the Swiss Cantons, the republic of Venice, and the city of Strasbourg. His majesty paid in the same manner those pensions which policy required he should allow foreign princes and communities; for France has always made herself a voluntary debtor to all Europe: from whence it happened, that all these different creditors set up new farms for their profit, in the midst of the king's; they had their commissaries and accountants among those of his majesty, and who applied themselves with equal industry to pillage the people. Certainly there never was a more dangerous, and at the same time a more shameful abuse, that every one, and particularly foreigners, should be thus suffered to concern themselves with the revenues of the state; and monopolisers of all nations multiply usuries and extortions in the most audacious manner,* and with impunity, arrogate to themselves part of the royal authority.

Nothing seemed to me more necessary than to strike at once at the root of this evil, by a second declaration; in which all the foreigners, and natives, princes of the blood, and other officers, were forbidden, on pretence of any claim, title, or debt whatever, to levy money upon the farms, and other revenues of the state; and were enjoined to apply to the exchequer only for the payment of their pensions, arrears, &c. I saw, unmoved, the storm which such a declaration would not fail of raising against me: in effect, the decree was no sooner published, than every place resounded with the clamours of the lords, and chief gatherers of taxes, as if it had reduced them to beggary, when they were only brought back to the conditions of their original agreement, and had their payments transferred to different funds. The king, who had great tenderness in his temper, was moved at these complaints, and could not suppose them to be so unreasonable as they were; he was apprehensive that my zeal had probably led me to commit some imprudence; he therefore sent for me, and as soon as I approached, "Ah! my friend," said he to me, "what have you done?"

It was not difficult for me to convince his majesty, that I had acted upon principles of justice and regularity; that it was not fit his finances should have any longer so many masters, nor so many different mortgages; that the farms would produce him an income twice as great, as soon as their value should be raised, by being in his own hands, and that this profit had not before accrued to the different proprietors, but to their agents and clerks; and lastly, that whenever this was done, it was not depriving them of what was their own, but taking away profits which they had no right to. The king comprehended the justness of this proceeding; but he was perplexed about the discontent he must necessarily give to little Edmonds,* as he called him, agent to the queen of England; a certain German, factor to the duke of Wirtemberg; Gondy, farmer to the duke of Florence; the constable, his godfather; the most distinguished persons in his court; and lastly his own sister.

---

* This abuse must have been attended with consequences of so ruinous a nature, that we cannot enough bless the memory of him who had the courage to charge himself with the public odium, entirely to extirpate it; instead of accusing him of a haughty behaviour and stern temper, without which it would have been impossible for him to have accomplished it.

I intreated his majesty to send for some of them, to whom I might speak in his presence. The constable was but just gone out of his apartment: he was called back: "Well, godfather," said the king to him, "what complaint have you against Rosny?" —"I complain," says he, "that he has put me "upon the level with the common people, by taking "from me a poor little assignment which I had in "Languedoc upon a tax, of which nothing ever "came to you." I answered the constable with great civility, that I should be the first to acknowledge myself guilty, if it had been my design that he should lose any thing. I asked him what profit he made of this impost, knowing well that he was one of those persons from whom the contractors exacted the highest price for their services. Monsieur de Montmorency answered my question; and I assured him, that he might depend on being paid the whole sum. "'Tis well," said he, "but who "will promise me that I shall be paid exactly as I "now am?" "I will," replied I, "and will give "you his majesty for security, who shall never turn "bankrupt, I promise you, at least if he suffers me "to manage his revenues as I propose to do; and I "will be counter-security to him, because I expect "that if I make him rich, he will be so kind to me "that I shall never break."

---

* Sir Thomas Edmonds, the English resident in France. See an account of this gentleman in the Introduction to Birch's Negociations, p. xi. Edit.

The constable, who was a plain honest man, was pleased with my answer, and sincerely approved my sentiments; he even confessed to me, that he had let out the impost in question for only nine thousand crowns a year, out of which he was obliged to give two thousand to the treasurer. "All this I "know," replied I, "and I am resolved to give you "the nine thousand crowns entire; yet the king "shall have eighteen thousand, and there will still "remain four thousand for me." The constable was amazed; he was not willing to own he had been so greatly imposed upon; while the king, in the mean time, laughed heartily. However, the next day I brought a person to his majesty, who in his presence took this farm at fifty thousand crowns, in the name of the states of Languedoc. The king offered to assign me, upon this sum, the four thousand crowns, which I had only proposed in jest. I refused them, and told his majesty, that the disorder in the finances, which I was endeavouring to remedy, having mostly proceeded from the easy temper of the deceased king, in appropriating his farms to the gratuities he bestowed on those about him, as well financiers as others, they would infallibly fall again into the same inconveniency, if it were not made a custom for men of business, who served his majesty usefully, to receive their rewards only from his own hands. The king agreed that I was in the right, and I lost nothing by it, for having procured twelve thousand crowns to be advanced upon this farm, he sent Beringhen with a present of four thousand to me.

I satisfied all those persons who were in the same situation as the constable; and, indeed, what could be more reasonable, than that his majesty should himself receive his own revenues? As for all the rest, whose interest made them deaf to arguments so convincing, I gave myself no more trouble about them. By this article, the revenues of the crown were increased sixty thousand crowns.

This trouble was slight, compared with that which I found in laying open the artifices of the traders: the most likely means I could think of to accomplish it, was to procure such a general and exact account of the finances as I have mentioned: but here lay the difficulty: I was not satisfied with that which I drew up, as has been observed, in the year 1596, for 1597; nor even for the year following, although it was much more exact than the others, because I was under a necessity of regulating my calculations according to the reports, and by the accounts, of the intendants and treasurers; from all of whom, without exception, notwithstanding the caution I used in choosing them for this purpose, I had reason to expect artifice and fraud. I therefore went to work again this year: I collected all the commissions of *tailles* sent to the several districts, and all the edicts by which money was raised throughout the kingdom; to these I joined the tariffs made in consequence of these edicts, and the leases and under-leases granted by the council to the first and second farmers: I compared all these pieces according to the knowledge which my former work had afforded me in this matter; and at last I thought that I had come for once to the bottom of the business: there was some abuses in the ordinary commissions of the *tailles;* these, however, were the least; there were much greater in the extraordinary commissions granted beforehand for the ensuing year; but the chief enormities appeared to arise from the under-leases: the farmers who took them from the council, and the treasurers of France, whom the farmers employed, fingered twice as much as had been assigned them; and as these farmers-general granted under-leases of under-leases, the series of the latter proceeding without end, produced a multiplication of charges, endless likewise, and affording no other advantage than that of maintaining in profusion those who did nothing to deserve it; first, the gentlemen of the council, then the farmers, and the rest in proportion, who kept the most profound secrecy respecting the mysteries into which they had been initiated.

I was transported with joy at this discovery; and by the authority of the king, to whom I had told it, I stopt the produce of the *tailles* paid upon extraordinary commissions, and, without paying any regard to them, sent word to the receivers, that they should account for it as for any other money, and should immediately remit it. I annulled for ever the under-leases; and ordered, that, for the future, every part of the revenue should have only one farmer and one receiver. Great were the clamours on this occasion; but the most discreet amongst the farmers, knowing that these murmurs only served to make them be taken notice of, and finding that by the suppression of a great part of the contractors, places were likely to become scarce, they came in haste to look for me, and took the same farms again upon their own account; with this difference, that their profit went to the king, the value of the farms being doubled.*

In proportion as my work was improved by my experience, I brought my general state of the revenues towards perfection; it then came into my mind to go on no longer by such forms of accounts as the receivers had drawn up themselves, but to send them some contrived by myself; in which I endeavoured to have every thing clear, and drawn up to the minutest particular. When they were returned to my hands I examined them over again with the utmost accuracy, noting the slightest inadvertence or omission; so that there was soon nothing at all left out, even in the least and most obscure parts of the revenue, because every thing was to be verified by the writings which I ordered to be brought along with it, and which I compared with the utmost attention. Thus I blew up all the mines of the receivers, which were very numerous, such as pretended deficiences, bad money, drawbacks, immunities, privileges of office, payments of rent, charge of carriage, fees to judges, and costs of auditing accounts; all these, and more, were very commodiously used to the advantage of the clerks, because nobody had given himself the trouble to rate, according to their real value, these different particulars, which being thus swelled out, they swallowed up a great part of the sum received; and the gentlemen of the council, who ought to have examined them, knew the advantage of this jargon. So little care was taken of the accounts of the receivers, that a man often quitted his employment, charged with vast sums of arrears, which afterwards sunk into oblivion. I put an end to this custom: I obliged those who came into office to enquire after the men that had gone before them, and used the only method that could have any effect upon them: as long as any arrears remained, they had no other fund for their salaries and allowance. They then knew very well how to hinder these little bankruptcies, instead of favouring them, as they had hitherto done.

---

* Though we are more and more convinced of the justice there is in the king taking for his own advantage all possible share in the profits of his farms and other revenues; yet we find, and that with some ground of reason, it seems, that since the duke of Sully's time, there has not been made, in this respect, all that progress which his views, and the great care he took, had apparently given hopes to expect. We shall have occasion to enter into this matter at some greater length, when our author comes to speak of the farming of the *tailles*, and other imposts, which is the true cause of all the difficulties that are to be met with in attaining to the end he proposed, and which all the ministers after him have endeavoured to reach.

Several paymasters, and particularly those of the chamber of accounts, upon whom assignments are most frequently granted, had the ingenuity to contrive ways of tiring out those who brought the assignments, by frequent delays, till they were content to take part of the money granted them, and to give an acquittance for the whole. I ordered that no payment should be kept back; and that no money should be taken for prompt payment. This prohibition put an end to all the accounts of the repayment of money payable by the precepts of the chamber, and to the multiplicity both of accounts and charges, by which the king's money was stolen to an incredible amount. From this time we had a clear insight into the finances, and confusion was at an end.

When the general state, of which I have been speaking, with the regulations and different models were drawn up, I went to read them before the council, in the king's absence. I easily perceived that my colleagues were offended at my diligence, and at my neglecting to desire their assistance in my work. However, they contented themselves with answering me drily, and in a jesting manner, that my secretaries had an easy time of it with me: these papers were indeed all written with my own hand.* But as soon as I had left them, they acknowledged that my labour had been infinitely great and exact; and that it would be in vain for the future to pretend to hide any thing from me. Two days after, when his majesty was present in the council, I read these papers again; upon which he asked them their opinions of my accounts. They allowed them to be very right, and said, that for a soldier I was extremely expert in business. I know not whether it was they who were the authors of a piece of slander that was current about this time, namely, that I had employed Du-Luat† to write a book, in which, under pretence of giving a new view of the finances, I railed, without charity or reserve, at his majesty's best servants. The king assured me, that all the endeavours of my enemies should never alter his friendship for me. Indeed, his majesty, from that moment, behaved to me in such a manner, as to make me look upon him rather as a friend than a master; he interested himself in all my concerns, shared in all my joys, and bore a part of every affliction.

---

* The present duke of Sully carefully preserves a great part of these manuscripts, with many other originals of M. de Rosny, which he takes pleasure to shew to such as visit him: he looks upon them as one of the principal ornaments of the museum which his taste for the sciences induces him to augment daily: and these are, in fact, so many glorious monuments of his illustrious family.

† Ange Capel, sieur Du-Luat. In vol. 8778 des Manuscripts de la Bibliot. du Roi, a book is mentioned in which he gives many useful hints to the members of the council with regard to the finances: this, no doubt, is the book which our author means here. Du-Luat is represented to us in the remarks on chap. ix. de la Confession de Sancy, as a quick, ready, and agreeable flatterer, who in a manner bewitched the duke de Sully, his master, with a genealogy, in which he derived his pedigree from the house of Courtenay. Journal du Regne de Henry III. printed in 1720, tom. II. p. 477.

With regard to the finances, I should be doubly ungrateful if I concealed the obligations I am under to this prince: he did not confine himself to the supporting all my proceedings with the utmost resolution (as it happened when the mayor and aldermen of Paris refused to communicate their accounts to me, under pretence that they had no connection with the council of the finances), nor in anticipating all my desires, or with the greatest goodness consoling me under difficulties, as he generally did, by proposing himself for an example: his knowledge and his advice, especially in relation to the finances, had often been of great use to me; and I candidly confess, that without it I should have in vain attempted so difficult an enterprise as a reformation in them: most part of my designs were hinted by him;* and I keep, with the greatest care, entire memorials written, although very long, with his own hand, upon subjects which equally employed us both.

After this I ought to own, with the same sincerity, that most of those praises which were bestowed on the administration of affairs in the reign of Henry IV. ought with justice to revert to him. Others would have served him with equal abilities and as much fidelity as me; for it never happens that good subjects abandon their king; it is the king who abandons good subjects. The great difficulty will ever be, to meet with a prince, who does not seek in a minister capable of managing his affairs, one who will comply with all his inclinations, and gratify all his passions; who uniting great wisdom to great penetration, calls none to those employments but persons whom he knows to have as much rectitude as capacity; in a word, who being possessed of great abilities himself, has not the weakness to envy that advantage in another. This jealousy of merit in a sovereign, which supposes, however, that he is himself possessed of it, creates in one sense more disorders in a state, than the hatred he is known to have of particular vices, can do it good.

---

* M. de Perefixe, p. 225, likewise assures us, that Henry IV. had thoroughly studied the subject of the finances.

When I quitted Brittany I left there regulations for the finances, differing according to the nature and privileges of that province; and afterwards sent thither the sieur de Maupeou, master of accounts, as well to enforce the observation of them, and raise the value of the farms in that province, as to hasten the payment of the money for which I had settled a fund. I likewise sent, for the same purpose, Coesnard, auditor of accounts, to Poictou, and Bizouz to Champaigne. I appointed Champigny over the toll of the rivers in the district of Orleans and Touraine. But for this time I have said enough of the finances.

III.—I WILL now proceed to incidents of another kind, which, by their singularity, rendered this year remarkable. It is yet a question, of what nature that illusion might be which was seen so often, and by so many persons, in the forest of Fontainebleau:

it was a spectre,* surrounded with a pack of hounds, whose cries were heard, and who were seen at a distance, but vanished when any one approached near to it. A whale was taken on the coast of Holland, eighty feet in length.† The Tiber overflowed in such a manner as to throw down a great number of houses, and lay part of the city of Rome under water. A report was spread in Europe, that the Jews, through hatred of the Christians, had offered the grand signior five hundred thousand ducats to destroy the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem.

But the most remarkable event, and with which this year was closed, was the death of Philip II. king of Spain, after suffering, for the space of eight or nine months, such agonizing* torments, as a principle of piety only could have enabled him to support with that patience he shewed for so long a time: however, this heroism of his was quite lost upon the vulgar. When they reflected, that through his avarice and ambition he had almost drowned the new world with the blood of its miserable inhabitants, and exercised equal cruelties on his own subjects, except taking away their lives, they looked upon those infectious ulcers with which his whole body was covered, to be not so much a natural accident, as the effect of divine vengeance. He left a will behind him, which, in my opinion, is too curious a document to be passed over in silence; it is not certainly known whether he dictated it in his illness, and gave it with his own hand to his son, or whether it was found after his death, with his other private papers, in the box that he had put into the hands of Christopher de Mora, his favourite; but this circumstance, of small importance in itself, is likewise of no consequence towards proving the authenticity of this piece, which is clear from many others. The copy that fell into my hands was sent me by the same person who sent one to the king; this was Bongars, his majesty's agent to the Protestants in Germany, who had it from the landgrave of Hesse, and that prince from the cities of Venice and Genoa; and it is in every respect so exactly conformable to those which were sent into different places, that it removes all doubt of its being forged by some of his Catholic majesty's enemies.*

---

* Perefixe mentions this apparition, and makes it utter, with a hoarse and frightful voice, these words, *M'attendez vous*, or *M'entendez vous*, or *Amendez vous*. He ascribes these visions to the delusive arts of sorcerers or evil spirits, ibid. part iii. See likewise Journal d'Henry IV. and La Chronologie Septennaire, ann. 1599, where it is said, that the king and his court, who laughed at this apparition as a fable, saw it one day distinctly among the bushes, in the shape of a tall black man; which so frightened them, that the best was he who could shew the lightest pair of heels. P. Matthieu assures us, (tom. II. p. 268,) that one day, at Fontainebleau, the duke of Sully, having heard the noise of it, came down, imagining it was the stamping of the king's horses, after his return from hunting. Bongars Epist. 184. ad Camerar, tells us with an air of gravity, that this was the ghost of an huntsman who had been killed in the forest in the time of Francis I.

† See the description of this monstrous fish in the Chronologie Septennaire, p. 17, and the account of the overflowing of the Tiber, in cardinal d'Ossat's letters, p. 365. "It was greater," says he, "than any recorded in history; so that the whole plain on which the "city of Rome stands was under water a pike's height in the streets "and houses; and that not one among a hundred could go to hear "mass on Christmas-day. This inundation did incalculable damage," &c.

---

* "For two and twenty days together there was," says Perefixe, "a flux of blood from all the passages of his body; and a little before "his death imposthumes that broke in his breast, from which there "continually issued so great a swarm of vermin, that all the care of "his attendants could not destroy them." Ibid. M. de Thou, liv. cxx. adds to this a dysentery, tenesmus, dropsy, &c. and he gives as moving a description of the deplorable condition of this prince, as of his patience and religious sentiments under it. Matthieu says, that he had no less than seven fistulas on two fingers of his right hand; and he ascribes this terrible disease to the debaucheries of his youth. He died on Sunday, September 13.

In this will Philip begins with a candid enumeration of all the faults he had committed, and places at their head his chimerical scheme of universal monarchy, the absurdity of which he earnestly endeavours to make his successor sensible of, by his example, and by that of Charles V. his father, whose instructions he adds to his own, although he confesses he had not profited by them. To this he joins the memoirs which had been left him by that emperor,† to the end that Philip III. might always keep them together. The emperor Charles V. being in the flower of his age, and of a healthy and vigorous constitution, master of Spain and Germany, covered with glory, and elated with success, formed the design of subduing the Infidels, and reuniting all the powers of Europe, as well as all the religions, to his. After many years spent in fruitless attempts, he quitted his crown, and with it all his chimerical projects. Philip II. his son, suffered himself to be taken in the same snare, and succeeded still worse, which he was desirous his successor should know. The difference of religions, laws, and manners among the Europeans; their almost equal knowledge of the art of war, the great number of strong cities with which Europe is filled, and which made as many long and painful sieges necessary; the inconstancy of the several nations, who are always ready to obey the first comer, who offers to assist them in repelling a domination which it had taken immense labours to establish; all these Philip represented as insurmountable obstacles to so great a design.

---

* Notwithstanding what M. de Sully says here, the piece which in his memoirs is intituled, *Testament du Roi d' Espagne* is neither the genuine latter will of that prince, nor even a faithful extract of it; which may easily be discovered, by comparing it with the particular and circumstantial one which M. de Thou gives us, liv. 120. But it might happen that this writing, which was likewise called, *Instruction du Roi d' Espagne à sons fils*, might really have been a secret, and have nothing more in common with the will and testament of this prince, than its being drawn up, as is evident, in the same spirit, and in conformity to the same maxims, without the precaution that is commonly used in writings designed to be made public. As to the substance thereof, it is given us in the Chronologie Septennaire, in the same manner as in these Memoirs, only in a different style and order.

† M. de Thou finds nothing in the last will of Philip II. comparable to the wisdom of the dispositions, and the dignity of expression shewn in that of Charles V.

He acknowledges that he had not been always of the same opinion; that the impetuosity of youth had prevented him from making those prudent reflections at first, and that afterwards two great victories, and the divisions which tore the kingdom of France to pieces, contributed to continue his infatuation, and to make him reject with disdain all the offers that had been made him for an advantageous peace. And as he thought he had reason to fear that his son would not make a better use of his understanding, it was by a declaration of all that a ridiculous ambition had made him unwisely undertake, that he sought to cure him.

He therefore acknowledges as a fault, his having endeavoured to get himself declared emperor of all the new world; he accuses himself of a design to invade Italy upon frivolous pretences; to conquer the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, a project which in six years had cost him twenty millions in preparations only for a fleet, with which he expected to overwhelm this power: this was the fleet called the Invincible Armada, which, however, was reduced to nothing, at one stroke, in 1588, as soon as it set out; to bring the Low Countries into subjection; to overthrow the French monarchy, by taking advantage of the weakness of the last king, and prevailing upon his subjects, especially the ecclesiastics, to revolt; and lastly, to deprive his own uncle Ferdinand, and Maximilian, king of the Romans, his nephew,* of the empire. He observes, that these intrigues cost him above six hundred millions of ducats;† a proof of which, he tells his son, he would find in the accounts which he had left in his cabinet, drawn up and written by himself. He blames himself less for his profusion of money, than that of human blood, which he caused to be shed: and indeed the confession he makes, that he had sacrificed twenty millions of men to his lust of dominion, and laid more countries waste, than all those he possessed in Europe, is enough to raise horror in every mind not wholly divested of humanity.

What has been the effect of all this? This is the reflection which he proposes to his son. Providence, as if it had thought itself concerned to prevent such wicked designs from succeeding, caused him to lose Germany, by the jealousy and hatred of his own relations; England, by the winds and storms; Ireland, by the treachery of its inhabitants, whom its great distance secured from his resentment; France, by the instability of the people, and their aversion to a foreign domination,* and lastly, by the great qualities of their king. So that the mighty preparations he had made, and the torrents of blood that had been shed, procured him no other advantage than the acquisition of the little kingdom of Portugal to his dominions.

---

* "Philip II. was called, The devil of the south, *Dæmonum meridianum*, because he troubled all Europe, in the south of which "Spain lies." Notes on la Henriade.

* P. Matthieu says, that the Indies yielded to the king of Spain two hundred and sixty millions of gold in the space of sixty-four years; and that he might have conquered all Turkey with that treasure only which he spent in Flanders. Tom. II. liv. 2. p. 266.

After this, Philip made a more particular application of these instructions to the person and situation of the heir to his throne; and reduced to the following articles the politics from which no king of Spain ought ever to depart, and Philip III. less than any other, on account of his tender age; these articles were, first, to maintain with France the peace which Philip II. himself hoped to have concluded before his death, and this as well in consideration of his own interest and quiet, as out of regard to his people: to keep up a good correspondence with the pope, and to strengthen it by having always a great many cardinals in his interest: to be upon friendly terms with the emperor and his family; nevertheless, not to suffer the pensions to pass through his hands, which his interest required he should continue to the electors, princes, and prelates of Germany, in order to keep them always attached to him by those largesses; at the same time to take care to foment divisions among them, which would afford him the means of turning to his advantage those opportunities that time might produce for acquiring the empire: to be more vigilant on the side of Germany, as there is a greater multiplicity of interests in the northern countries than in any other place. Poland, Denmark, and Sweden, were powers from which he thought there was little to be apprehended; the first, not only on account of its distance, but because the policy of the princes its neighbours, as well as its own, being mistaken, made the king of Poland rather the minister than the master of his subjects: the two others, by reason of their distance likewise, joined to their poverty and unskilfulness in war, were as little to be feared. He took care not to say the same with regard to France, England, and Flanders, which he considered as powers very formidable to Spain, and against which he recommended his son, to be always upon his guard.

---

* In the genuine latter will of Philip II. is an article with regard to Henry IV. the omission of which in our Memoirs is sufficient to prove that the piece to which this name is given is supposititious; namely, that this prince being troubled with strong remorse of conscience for the usurpation of the kingdom of Navarre, recommends to his son what had been before recommended to himself by his father, namely, to cause this point to be carefully examined by the most able lawers, in order to restore the crown to its rightful owner, if it ought to be done, according to equity. Charles V. had said as much to Philip II. and Ferdinand and Isabel to Charles V. . . . In this manner to refer the executiug of a disposition known to be just, to a successor who, one might be assured, would pay no regard to it, is what M. de Thou calls an impudent trifling with the Deity.

With respect to England,* his advice was, to neglect nothing to prevent the three crowns which comprise the British isles from being placed on the same head, an event which this able politician, from a spirit of prediction, mentioned as very near; and for that purpose not to regret the money which was distributed in those islands to make partisans, and to continue filling them with spies, but of a different class from those that were then there, whose fidelity Philip II. thought he had reason to suspect. To cultivate carefully those divisions which a diversity of religions might produce in that state, as well as in France: he considered those which the league gave rise to amongst us as things now old and useless, since we had a king of Henry's capacity: but to give occasion for many other civil discords in each of those two states, and especially such as might keep them in war against each other, or at least in distrust and suspicion, which might be done, by favouring the pretensions of one upon the other, to which their mutual hatred naturally incited them. To consider as the greatest misfortune imaginable, that stroke which should join the United Provinces, and those two powers, already united amongst themselves, in one common interest; since from thence must naturally result a power capable, says he, of subjecting sea and land. To find means to exclude all the princes of Europe from the navigation of the two Indies, an attempt which could meet with no obstructions but from those three powers; and less from France than the two others, because she had no marine; a new motive for gaining possession of the Low Countries, and yet more of England.

---

* They have made him say at the point of death, when speaking of England, *Pacem cum Anglo, bellum cum reliquis,* "Peace with the "English, and war with all the rest of the world."

However, amidst all these counsels which Philip gave his successor, he never advised him to enter into any war, not even with the rebels in the Low Countries, but earnestly dissuaded him from it. The conduct he recommended to be observed with the Provinces was, to grant a general pardon there; to require nothing of the people but that they should acknowledge the Spanish authority; to watch the behaviour of the governors, ministers, and officers, who were maintained there; not to continue them too long, nor to give them too absolute a power, because they would be the persons whom there would be the most reason to fear, if ever they entertained a design of heading the party.

If, however, Spain could not avoid engaging in a war, Philip was not willing that his successor should be deprived of that knowledge which experience had given him in this respect. He apprised him, that if he proposed not to sink under it, he must not undertake a war but in such favourable opportunities as might, from time to time, present themselves, such as changes in the government, civil dissensions, faults or necessities of the sovereigns, &c. That maxim of Philip, that a prince should make himself acquainted even with the most particular inclinations of the princes his neighbours, is so true, and of such vast importance that no change should ever happen in the states about him, but what he should be prepared for, and be in readiness to take immediate advantage of. He concluded this article by shewing the new king, that he is answerable for his actions at the tribunal of a God who judges wars, and, unhappily, not by the same rules which warlike princes lay down for themselves.

After these maxims, which regarded only the government abroad, Philip proceeded to those which he thought necessary for the government at home. He held it just, that a king of Spain, having nations under his command, between whose customs and manners there was as great a difference as distance in their realms, should study to govern each according to their respective character, and all with gentleness and moderation: That he should be acquainted with the talents and dispositions of his councellors and secretaries, and choose them himself; that he should likewise expedite all his dispatches, and render himself expert in the use of ciphers, that he might not expose a secret of consequence to be betrayed by a confident: that he should be careful to seek for men of honour and sufficient abilities to bestow employments upon: that he should avoid giving any person any great cause of complaint, especially those of high quality; he observed, that the prince, his eldest son,* had suffered by it; and that he should make a just distinction between the ancient and the new nobility, in order to advance the latter, as being generally susceptible of pure and disinterested sentiments: that he should lessen the number of the persons who were employed in the revenues, administration of justice, and the officers of the household; and recommended the same conduct to be observed with regard to the ecclesiastics; to which he added, that they, as well as others, ought to contribute to the necessities of the state, not only because they could better afford it, on account of their riches, but likewise because it became necessary for them to do so, if they would not forfeit the respect that was due to their character, by luxury, sloth, and impiety, the ordinary fruits of great riches, and the indolence in which they lived; but that he should increase the number of merchants, husbandmen, artists, and soldiers; by whose industry, labour, and frugality alone, a state is supported against the ruin with which it is threatened by the dissoluteness of the other ranks. All principles, which, like these, tend to maintain subordination and economy in a state, against corruption and disorder, merit praises from whatever mouth they proceed.

Philip closed his will with the article relating to domestic dispositions. He enjoined his successor to fulfil the promises and other clauses of the infanta his sister's marriage. He proposed a match for the young king, in which he had already made some advances, and privately regulated all the articles, which he informed him he would find in the hands of Loo. He observed, that no king ever loved his father's favourite; yet, notwithstanding, he would propose Christopher de Mora for his confident, who had been his own. Philip III. chose rather to prove the truth of the observation, than comply with the request, and gave Mora's place to the marquis of Doria. He required, as an instance of respect due to the memory of a father, that all those persons to whom he had given employments should be continued in them; but he expressed himself in such a manner with regard to this article, as shewed he rather wished than hoped for a compliance with it. He recommended to his son the doctors Ollius and Vergius, who had attended him in his illness. He mentioned Antonio Perès* as a dangerous man, with whom it was necessary he should be reconciled; and afterwards not to permit him to stay either in France, Flanders, or Spain especially, but in the useless country of Italy. Philip concludes this piece with a short maxim, To love God, to endeavour to be virtuous, and to profit by the precepts of a father. It must be confessed, that in this will there are likewise many more instances of piety† and resignation to the will of God, who, he said, had in mercy chastised him in this life rather than in the other.

---

* Don Carlos, prince of Spain: it was by order of his father that he lost his life; and it appears that his crime was rather gaining over the affections of the grandees than treating them with contempt.

---

* Antony Perès had been chief minister to Philip II. with whom he fell into disgrace for reasons which have no manner of relation to the subject of these Memoirs: he retired to Paris, where he died in 1611. He was a great politician, and a man of very considerable parts: the following maxim was one of his, which includes a deal of meaning in three words, namely, *Roma*, *Consejo*, *Piolago*, that is, Gain over the court of Rome, compose the council of proper persons, and be master at sea.

† "He ordered his coffin to be brought him, which was made of "copper, and a death's head to be laid upon a buffet, with a crown

The first of these articles which was executed by the king of Spain was that relating to his marriage with the archdutchess of Gratz:* he sent immediately after the death of his father to demand her in marriage; and in the beginning of the year following she set out for Spain, accompanied by her brother, the archduke Albert, with whom she landed upon the coast of Marseilles, for the benefit of that air. The duke of Guise, who was governor of the province, having notice of it, sent to let the king know of her arrival, and received orders to give this princess a very honourable reception; his majesty destined fifty thousand crowns to be expended for that purpose, and ordered them to be paid at Marseilles. I was upon the point of sending thither, to direct how this money was to be disposed of, either La-Fond, or another of my domestics, who was only a footman of my wife's, a man of low stature and a mean figure, but in whom I had discovered so much capacity, fidelity, and prudence, that I thought I ought to endeavour his establishment: but there was no occasion for it, a person I had upon the spot was sufficient; for the archdutchess, notwithstanding the solicitations that were made her by the duke of Guise and the city of Marseilles, would not enter any of the great cities, to avoid the ceremonial, but ordered tents to be set up upon the shore, where she rested and heard mass; the archduke, indeed, was so devout as to visit the churches at Marseilles,

---

"of gold by it;" See Chronologie Septennaire, (ann. 1598) where may be found, together with an account of all that this prince said and did in his last illness, the history also of his public and private life.

* Margaret of Austria, daughter of the archduke of Gratz.

but went to them incognito, and without any train; and after kissing the relics, returned without either eating or drinking.

This marriage united the two branches of the house of Austria by a double tie, the deceased king of Spain having already, on the 5th of May, the preceding year, married the infanta Isabella, his daughter, to the archduke Albert, who, for that purpose, had divested himself of the cardinal's purple. This princess had, nominally, a very large portion, since it was made up of no less than the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries, Franche-Comté, and Charolois: but the additional clauses which were inserted, that this new sovereign should be excluded from any commerce in the Indies, and not suffered to permit in his states the exercise of any religion but the Roman Catholic, without which the donation was made void, reduced it, in effect, to nothing, by the difficulty he would find in obliging the Flemings to accept of such hard conditions.

The archduke, till he could go in person to Flanders, to remove all these obstacles, sent the high admiral of Arragon thither,* in the quality of his lieutenant-general, who performed some actions on the frontiers of Germany; and afterwards his cousin, the cardinal André, who issued many edicts, but without effect. The house of Austria began to think there was danger in delays; the archduke therefore went himself into the Low Countries, taking with him his bride, on the 5th of September this year; the remainder of which was spent in threatenings on his side, which likewise produced nothing; so that there was a necessity for coming to open force: and this was the beginning of that long and bloody war between Spain and the Flemings, the progress and event of which I shall take notice of each year.

---

* Consult the Chronologie Septennaire for the years 1598,9, both as to those military expeditions, and as to all that is here said of the marriage of the king and the infanta of Spain. Matthieu, ibid. p. 298, &c.

IV. At the same time that the marriage of his Catholic majesty was celebrated in Spain, that of the princess Catherine with the prince of Bar* was celebrated at Paris. It was upon this establishment that the princess at length fixed her destiny, hitherto so uncertain. During the life of queen Catherine it was first proposed to marry her to the duke of Alençon; but Henry III. would not consent to it, on account of the hatred he bore to his brother. Afterwards, they talked of giving her to Henry III. himself; but this the queen-mother opposed, through the aversion she had to the family of Navarre. The princess, in her turn, refused the old duke of Lorrain, because he had children by a former marriage. The king of Spain demanded her, on condition of a strict union between the king of Navarre and him, which the first of these princes would not hear of. The princess was afterwards sought by the duke of Savoy; but under circumstances wherein this marriage might prove prejudicial to the Protestant religion, and therefore the Protestants themselves threw difficulties in the way. She would not have the prince of Condé on account of his poverty; and refused the king of Scotland, without giving any good reason for it. The prince of Enhalt made likewise his advances. And in those transports of anger with which she was sometimes animated against the king her brother, she reproached him, that he would have thrown her into the arms of three or four other foreign princes, or, as she called them, gentlemen, for the payment of their subsidies. Lastly, her inclination for the count of Soissons made her reject the duke of Montpensier, who was a suitable match for her. At length, the necessity of procuring an establishment determined her to accept the prince of Bar.

---

* Henry, duke of Bar, who became duke of Lorrain, after the death of his father, Charles II. "The king gave his sister, at her "marriage, three hundred thousand crowns of gold for her portion," says the historian Matthieu, ibid. p. 278.

This designed marriage was no sooner made public, than the ecclesiastics in general, and the French bishops in particular, then assembled at Paris, found, in the difference of religion of the two parties, a reason for preventing its conclusion, which they did not suffer to escape them. The first measure they took was to hinder, at Rome, with all their power, the dispatching of the dispensation, without which, they imagined, it was not possible to proceed to the celebration of the marriage. In this respect, they could not trust the care of their interests to one more faithful than d'Ossat, who, nevertheless, was sent to this court to manage those of the king. But this is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that this ecclesiastic has suffered from me, the reproach of having not only exceeded but betrayed his commission. If I may give credit to the memorial from Rome, which has been already mentioned, d'Ossat, in the name of the whole party of whom he was the instrument, neglected nothing to dissuade the pope from granting the dispensation, which he was particularly employed by his majesty to solicit. These persons gave his holiness to understand, that if he continued firm in his refusal to grant this favour, it would produce two things equally to be desired; one, that the princess would turn Catholic; the other, that such a change would be thought by the Protestants an effect of the violence used to her by the king her brother, for that purpose, which would increase the distrust they already openly shewed of his majesty, make them consider him as their enemy and declared persecutor, and bring on, at length, that intestine war which, according to them, was so much to be desired, for the interests of the holy father and the true religion.

The clergy did not stop here; they made remonstrances severe enough to merit the title of threats. His majesty had the complaisance to listen to them, and permitted a conference to be held, in which doctor Du-Val on one side, and the minister Tilenus on the other, endeavouring to support their cause, debated with much heat, and, in my opinion, to little purpose; though each boasted afterwards, that he had vanquished his adversary. I speak as one who was a witness of the dispute, for I suffered myself to be drawn along with the crowd which ran thither, as to a very interesting spectacle. I did not come in till toward the conclusion, when the two disputants were beginning to sink under their fatigue. I know not for what reason they were desirous of making me play the part of a judge upon this occasion; probably because they were informed I had been employed by his majesty to draw up the articles of marriage between the princess Catherine and the prince of Bar. They were beginning to repeat to me all the points of a dispute, which had already taken up several hours; but I earnestly intreated them to spare me either this trouble or this honour, telling them, that if two such learned men had not been able to reconcile the canon and decrees of the pope with the holy scripture, or to prove that such a task was impossible, it could not be expected that an ignorant person like me should be equal to it; and this was really my opinion.

This conference not having produced all the effects the clergy expected from it,* and finding likewise that they succeeded no better at Rome, they declared, that nothing should be capable of prevailing upon them to give their consent to this marriage. Little regard would have been paid to this; but as it was necessary that a bishop should perform this ceremony, and as all those gentlemen held together, hence arose an obstacle, upon which they founded their last hopes.

In this perplexity the king determined to have recourse to the archbishop of Rouen,† from whom, being his natural brother, and obliged to him for the bishopric, more complaisance was to be expected; besides, his majesty, as well as all France, knew this prelate to be not very scrupulous (to say no more) in matters of religion. However, upon the first proposition made him by the king, the archbishop, like a devout rebel, overwhelmed him with citations, as often ill as well chosen, from the holy fathers, the holy canons, and the holy scriptures. The king, astonished, as may be well imagined, at such uncommon language from a man who generally talked of quite different matters, could hardly refrain from laughing in his face, asking him, by what miracle it was that he had become so learned and conscientious? Supposing, however, the archbishop might be wrought upon by serious arguments to comply, he tried their efficacy; but finding him still untractable, he grew angry, and reproached him with his ingratitude: "And, since you carry it so high," added the king, resuming his first air of pleasantry, "I will send you a great doctor, your usual confessor, who is wonderfully skilful in cases of "conscience." This great doctor and director of consciences was Roquelaure, an old companion of monsieur de Rouen, and an actual sharer in his debauches, and by whose intreaty he had obtained the archbishopric. The prelate understood perfectly well the meaning of this slight threat, and the embarrassment he appeared to be in was a proof that he was under some apprehensions of those great advantages which an accustomed familiarity would give Roquelaure over him, without the addition of those which he derived from that wit which all the court acknowledged to be free, ingenious, and fruitful in the most happy sallies; and the archbishop himself was not often guilty of carrying too far the respect due to the episcopal character.

---

* Perefixe says, that the king not being able to accomplish her conversion, though he made use of threats, said one day to the duke of Bar, "My good cousin, 'tis your business to break her."

† Charles, the natural son of Antony of Navarre by mademoiselle de la Beraudiere de la Guiche, otherwise called La-Roüet, who was one of the maids of honour to the queen-mother.

The king having quitted monsieur de Rouen, sent for Roquelaure; "Do you know, Roquelaure," said he to him, "that your archbishop takes upon him "to play the prelate and doctor, and would quote the "holy canons to me, of which I believe he under-"stands as little as you or I; however, by his re-"fusal my sister's marriage is stopped: therefore "pray go to him, and talk to him as you used to "do, and put him in mind of past times."

"By the Lord, sire," replied Roquelaure, "this "is not well done of him; for it is high time, in "my opinion, that our sister Kate should taste the "sweets of marriage. But pray, sire, tell me what "reasons this fine fellow of a bishop gave you for "his refusal? he seldom has much better to give "than myself. I will go to him and teach him his "duty." He did not fail to perform his promise: "What is this I hear, archbishop?" said he, as soon as he entered his apartment: "they tell me you "have been playing the coxcomb; by the Lord, I "will not suffer it; it derogates too much from my "honour, since every one says you are governed by "me. Know you not that at your entreaty I became your security to the king, when I prevailed "upon him to give you the archbishopric of Rouen; "therefore I desire you would not make me out a "liar, by continuing thus obstinately to act like a "fool: this might do between you and I, who are "often seen quarrelling at dice, but such disputes must not be thought on when our master's "service and his absolute commands are in question."

"Merciful God!" replied monsieur de Rouen, "what is this you would have me to do, Roquelaure? What! must I make myself ridiculous, "and suffer the reproaches of all the other prelates, "by an action which the whole world agrees is unjustifiable, and which every one of the bishops to "whom it has been proposed by the king has refused?" "Hold a little, pray," interrupted Roquelaure: "there is a wide difference between them "and you; for those men have puzzled their brains "so much about Greek and Latin, that they are "become fools---and you are the king's brother, "and obliged to obey all his commands, without "any hesitation: the king did not make you an "archbishop to preach to him, and quote the canons, but to do whatever his service required: if "you continue this perverseness and obstinacy, I "will acquaint Jeanneton de Condom, Bernarde "l'Eveillee, and master Julian, with the whole story: "Do you understand me? don't let me tell you this "a second time: know, that nothing ought to be "so dear to you as the king's favour, which, together with my solicitations, have done you more "good than all the Greek and Latin of the others: "By the Lord, it is a fine thing to hear you talk of "the canons, of which you know as little, as of "High-german." Monsieur de Rouen endeavoured to persuade him, that he ought to quit his ludicrous style, which was agreeable enough when he was in his youth; and hinted something concerning paradise to him: "How! paradise!" interrupted Roquelaure: "Are you such an ass as to talk of a "place, where you have never been, where you "know not what is doing, or whether you shall "be admitted when you attempt to get in!" Yes, "yes," said the archbishop, I shall be admitted "there, do not doubt of it." You talk finely," said his companion, pressing still harder upon him. "By the Lord, I believe paradise is as little de-"signed for you as the Louvre for me: but let us "lay aside a little your paradise, your canons, and "your conscience, and do you now resolve to marry "the princess to the prince of Bar, for if you fail, "I shall take from you three or four paltry Latin "words that you have always in your mouth; *far-"ther, the said deponent knoweth not:* and then adieu "to the cross and mitre; and, what is worse, to "your fine palace of Gaillon, and revenue of ten "thousand crowns."

Many other things passed between these two men, which may be guessed at by this sample. Roquelaure would not leave the archbishop till he had made him promise to marry the princess; and accordingly he was the person who performed the ceremony.* I received from both parties very magnificent presents, in return for the pains I had taken; among others, a Spanish horse of great value, which was given me by the duke of Lorrain: I sent him to his majesty, who ordered me to keep him.

This was not the only occasion on which the clergy were against the king; they made a more resolute and likewise a more important opposition to the registering the edict of Nantes, which always appeared to them a difficult morsel to digest: as they had for almost a year held an assembly at Paris on this account, they had had time to prejudice the parliament, and other sovereign courts, as well as the Sorbonne, against this edict. All these bodies, as soon as it was published, objected to it, and occasioned disorder that may be better imagined than described. It was the subject of all conversation; every one applied himself to criticise the edict, and to offer different arguments against it, all which were far from being just, as well as the reasons the parliament gave for not registering it: but that candour and sincerity I have professed to observe here in matters that nearest concern me, oblige me to confess, that they were not absolutely to blame.

---

* "The ceremony was performed one Sunday morning," says the Chronologie Septennaire. . . "The king came to fetch the lady "Catherine, his sister, when she was dressed; and leading her by "the hand into his closet, where her future spouse had come be"fore her, he ordered M. . the archbishop of Rouen, to marry "them, &c. and that it was his pleasure it should be so. This the "archbishop at first refused, alleging, that the usual solemnity "ought to have been observed therein. To which the king very "learnedly made answer, That his presence supplied the want "of all other solemnity, and that his closet was a consecrated "place."

For example, the Protestants, by one of the articles of the edict, were permitted to call and hold all sorts of assemblies, convocations, &c. when and where they pleased, without asking leave either of his majesty or the magistrates; and likewise to admit into them all foreigners whatever, without acquainting any superior tribunal: as also, on their side, to be present, without license, at the assemblies which were held amongst the foreigners. It is very plain, that a point as absolutely contrary to all the laws of the kingdom, as prejudical to the authority of the king,* the right of the magistracy, and the utility and quiet of the people, could not have been obtained but by stratagem; and it was upon this point likewise that the enemies of the Protestants insisted chiefly, in the several remonstrances they made to the king, each alleging those arguments in which they were most interested. The parliament remonstrated, that this article completed the ruin of their authority, which the clergy had already confined to such narrow limits, as well as the king's (for it was pretended, that these two authorities were so closely connected that they could not be separated), that if appeals against the irregular exercise of ecclesiastical authority should be taken away, they would have only the shadow of any power. The clergy and the Sorbonne complained of the superiority this concession would give the Protestant over the Catholic church in France which had never been possessed of so large a power in its jurisdiction; and this was certainly true. Lastly, they enumerated all the bad consequences which this absolute independence of the French Huguenots might produce, either among themselves or their associations with all the enemies of France in Europe.

---

* "This point," says le Septennaire, "the marshal de Bouillon "had managed with some persons, who perhaps were not aware of "the danger of it; but the sieur Berthier, who was agent for the "clergy, and Bishop of Rieux, disputed it so warmly with the "marshal, in the presence of the king, that after hearing his rea- "sons, and in regard of the importance of the point itself, his ma- "jesty ordered it to be erazed." Ann. 1599. p. 66. This account of M. Cayet's agrees with that of F. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 280, & seq.

The king, in his reply to these remonstrances, observed that he could not conceive how so important an article had been passed over in the edict without any difficulty, as he did not remember that any thing whatever had been then said to him about it, though he had ordered them to give their opinions respecting all the new articles, or those of the greatest importance: however, he promised to enquire fully into it, after which he would give the parliament an answer, or make such provisions, as should give them entire satisfaction. When they left him, he immediately sent for me, and shewing me the edict, I concealed from him none of the sentiments I have delivered here: I added, that by too great zeal to make this article advantageous for the Protestants, I thought he was doing them a mischief, in that it would give large scope for all the slander that would be invented against the worthy men of the party, of their intriguing with foreigners against the state, or of suffering themselves to be suborned. The king approved of all I said, and ordered me not to mention it, or take the least notice that he had spoke to me on the subject, because he wished that I should be present at an assembly (which he would convoke) of all the most considerable Protestants, in order to represent to them the inconveniences of this article, and to induce them to consent to its modification, where, by my supporting this proposition, as being for the advantage of his majesty's service, he did not doubt but my arguments and influence would have considerable effect. I promised to act accordingly; and the king then sent for Schomberg, the president de Thou, Calignon, and Jeannin, who had been commissioned to treat with the Protestants, and in some degree reproached them with having passed so important an article, and at which all the clergy were offended, without any difficulty, or acquainting him with it. De Schomberg and de Thou, who were the two principal persons, made no other excuse, than that messieurs de Bouillon, de la Tremouille, du Plessis, their ministers, and the Protestant deputies, were so obstinate respecting it, nay had even used threats of retiring, and rejecting the whole of the edict if this article did not pass; that considering the state of France, and the peace with Spain not being certain, they judged it to be more advisable to accede to it, than, by breaking off the conference, to throw the kingdom again into its former confusion, a point to which they saw both Huguenots and Catholics (though with different views) tending. The king having represented this to the syndic, Berthier, and observed that messieurs de Schomberg, de Thou, and Jeannin, having been always good Catholics, he had left every thing to them, believing that they would not fail to provide carefully for whatever related to the Catholic religion and its church. To this Berthier, somewhat irritated, made answer, that when the same thing had been alleged in the assembly of the clergy, many of the most zealous had observed, that it was not surprising so little care had been taken in the affairs mentioned by his majesty, since every one knew the deputies were very indifferent Catholics, neither of them having for a long time prayed to the saints, nor kneeled before the image of the Virgin or the cross, and did not believe in indulgences, the merit of good works, prayers for the dead, purgatory, pilgrimages, nor fasts by distinction of food !* therefore, he entreated his majesty, in the name of all the clergy of the kingdom (as he was a good Catholic and believed in all these things), to remove the scandal so pernicious an article would occasion, without paying any farther attention to the opinions of those who had been appointed to draw up the edict, since they were considered by many to have as little faith in the doctrines of the Catholic as the Protestant church. The king assured Berthier that he would immediately act in such a manner as should give satisfaction to all parties, provided they would listen to reason.

On the following day I repaired to the general assembly, which was convoked, of all the principal Protestants, who were at this time in Paris, and to which I had been invited the day before, in the belief, perhaps, that I should refuse to come, as I had done on the other occasions. As I entered, the duke de Bouillon said to me, "By what I see, sir, "we shall at last have the happiness you have so "often denied us, that is, to find you among us, in "settling our affairs, and we cannot but conclude, "since you have taken this trouble, that it is not "without particular reasons:" I replied, that on the former occasions I was so occupied in settling the state of the finances, that I had not been able to attend to any thing else; but that having now finished that business, I had employed the leisure it afforded me, to testify my zeal for the Protestant religion, and for the service of them all; without any other design whatever, as I did not even know for what reason my presence had been requested in the assembly. "We believe you," said la Tremouille; "but whatever may be the cause of your coming hither the company considers it as a favour." I went and seated myself between messieurs de Mouy, de Clermont, and de Saint Marie-du-Mont, who asked me if I were not informed of the reasons why the assembly had met. I answered in the negative. They then told me it was to consider an article which had been introduced into the edict, and which was disapproved by almost all the Protestants, except the duke of Bouillon, la Tremouille, du Plessis, and some others in their interest; from what they had learnt, they continued, the author of the article was the duke of Bouillon, who hoped by it to make his church of Sedan one of the body of Protestant churches in France, without prejudicing his pretensions to be a foreign prince, in case he should get Sedan created a fief of the empire,* in order to take the rank of prince of it, without the opposition of any one, as he saw that not only the dukes and peers, but also the marshals of France, when his seniors, wished to take precedence of him: but that all this being now too apparent, he would find very few to support the obnoxious article. I delivered my sentiments to the assembly, which were approved of; and it was agreed that the article should be altered, which was done, together with several others, before the edict was agreed to.† There were many evil disposed

---

* If a certain private conversation be true, which d'Aubigné makes the president de Thou hold with the duke de la Tremouille, when he was sent by his majesty to the assembly of the Calvinists, the suspicions of the clergy would not be ill founded: "You have "too much judgment," says the president to him, "not to know "very well, that considering the point at which matters now stand, "and the concessions we have already made you, the demands "which you may make are not at their utmost height —— M. de "Schomberg is a Lutheran, and very far from being a good Cal- "vinist; as for my own part, you shall know the inmost thoughts "of my heart." Tom. III. lib. v. ch. 1. But it is very probable that d'Aubigné has related this conversation upon the credit of persons not to be depended on, as also some other points of his history, which at that time drew an arrêt of parliament upon the work.

---

* Consult the life of the duke of Bouillon, liv. v.

---

* The edict of Nantes was ratified on Thursday the 25th of February this same year, after many difficulties started by the clergy, the university, and the parliament. It was upon this occasion that Henry IV. said to the Bishops; "You have exhorted me concerning my duty; let me now exhort you concerning yours: let "us excite a mutual emulation in each other, which of us shall perform their parts the best. My predecessors gave you good "words; but I, with my gray jacket on, will shew you good "deeds: though I am all grizzled without, yet I am all gold within: "I will look into your papers, and anwer them as favourably "as I can." The following was the return he made to the parliament, when they came to make him remonstrances; "You see me "in my closet, where I come to speak with you, not in my royal "robes, nor with my sword and other military habiliments on, as "my predecessors were wont, nor like a prince who is to receive "an ambassador, but clad like the father of a family, in his plain "doublet, to speak familiarly with his children; what I have to say "to you is, to intreat you would register, with the usual solemnities, the edict which I have granted to those of the Calvinist "religion. What I have done is for the sake of peace, which I "have concluded with the neighbouring powers around me, and "would have the same observed within my own dominions." After he had told them the reasons that induced him to grant this edict, he added; "Such as would hinder my edict from passing, are for "war, which I will to-morrow declare against the Protestants, but "I will not carry it on, I will send them to it. I made the edict, "and would have it observed: my will ought to be a sufficient "reason; for in an obedient state they never ask their prince any "other. I am king, I speak to you as such, and I will be obeyed." Peref. ibid. and Journal d'Henry IV. ibid. See also in M. de Thou,

persons, both Protestants and Catholics, who secretly endeavoured to procure the total rejection of the edict, in order to throw France once more into all the miseries of a civil war; but the king's wisdom and firmness surmounted all these difficulties, and brought the whole affair to a peaceable termination.

V. The king acted with the same prudence with respect to some disaffected Catholics, who being unwilling to appear openly themselves, brought one Martha Brossier, a pretended demoniac, in play, who had become the object of the people's curiosity, who are always struck with the marvellous, whether true or false. It is indeed surprising, that a matter so ridiculous in itself, and which was even below the consideration of the mob, should have been talked of for a year and a half, and become an affair of state: one half of the world suffer themselves to be dazzled by every thing that seems supernatural, and others are kept in awe, not by the thing itself, but by the motives upon which it is founded. Martha Brossier met with many protectors among the clergy, even as far as Rome, whither she took care to be carried. The king, without any extraordinary notice allowed both the time and means necessary to make itself known:*

---

and in le Septennaire, anno 1599, the several modifications which were added to the edict of Nantes, and all the conferences held on this occasion.

* We have a very curious account of all that relates to this pretended demoniac in M. de Thou, at the beginning of book cxxiii. ann. 1599, of which the following is an abstract: one James Brossier, a baker at Romorantin in Sologne, taking a dislike to his own trade, turned conjurer, with a design to travel about the country with his three daughters, Martha, Silvina, and Mary; the eldest, who is the person spoken of here, had succeeded so well, by the instructions which her father had given her, to counterfeit a demoniac, that she imposed upon every-body at Orleans and Cleri, except Charles

after which, the whole trick ended in the general contempt of its authors and actress.

The death of a great many persons of distinction about this time afforded matter for other discourse. The chancellor de Chiverny, Schomberg, and d'Incarville, all three members of the council of finances, dying within a short time of each other, occasioned a great alteration of affairs: the seals were given to Bellievre; the office of comptroller-general, which d'Incarville had possessed, was, at

---

Miron, bishop of Angers, who found out the imposture, by putting common water in the place of holy water, and holy in the place of common; by repeating a verse from Virgil instead of the beginning of the exorcism, and touching her with a key instead of his episcopal crosier. This did not hinder her from coming to Paris, where she pitched upon the church of St. Genevieve for the scene on which to shew herself to the people, who flocked thither in great numbers. She imposed upon all the credulous ecclesiatics, and upon the Capuchins, who began to exorcise her in good earnest; and even upon some physicians whom Henry IV. had sent to see her: though all the rest deposed formally against her, especially Michael Marescot, one of the physicians, who publicly convicted her of not understanding Greek or Latin, and having no greater capacity than what is common to her sex; and, in short, of being an impostor and an arrant cheat. But notwithstanding all this, the ecclesiastics and preachers knew so well how to interest religion in this affair, and the pretended demoniac played her part so well, that the arrêt of parliament, which enjoined her, as also her father, to return home, how wise and reasonable soever it was, occasioned strange murmurings, and almost a revolt in Paris: and this gave the king a deal of uneasiness, who saw that what enemies he had remaining of the old league, did appear again on this occasion. Alexander de La-Rochefoucaut, lord of Saint-Martin, and count de Randan, even undertook to revive this affair, by causing Martha to be sent to Avignon, and thence to Rome, where she gained still more partisans. But, unluckily for her, cardinal d'Ossat was there, who employed himself so effectually in this affair, that at length Martha and all her family saw themselves utterly abandoned; and they lived and died despised and quite miserable. Consult also the other historians.

my solicitation, granted to de Vienne; and that of superintendant of the finances was restored in my favour. Henry having sent for me to the garden of the Tuilleries, were he was walking, told me that he was resolved to entrust the care of the finances to one man only; and assuming a very serious manner, made me promise to give freely my opinion of that man, when he should name him to me. Having assured him that I would, he smiled, and tapping my cheek, told me, I had reason to know him well, since it was myself. His majesty bestowed on me likewise the post of surveyor of the highways, for which he sent me the patents, together with those of superintendant of the fortifications; and Sancy, resigning himself up to his usual whims,* having thought proper to retire from the council, and to give up the office of overseer of the works, the king added these employments likewise to the other favours he loaded me with. The appointments for the superintendancy were settled at the rate of twenty thousand livres: those of surveyor of the highways, and of Paris in particular, were ten thousand livres.

His majesty was so well pleased with this method of fixing the rate of salaries, that he was likewise desirous of regulating in the same manner the gratuities he proposed to give me, as well, he said, to prevent me from expecting a gratuity for every considerable service I did him, as to spare himself the trouble of causing all the presents he made me to be registered, since without that, I would not receive any from him, however trifling their value was: he therefore declared to me, that all those rewards and presents should for the future be comprised in one settled gratuity, which should be paid me the beginning of every year, in the form of letters patents, registered by the parliament; and asked me before hand if I was satisfied with the sum, which was sixty thousand livres: adding, that it was his desire, that with this money I should purchase estates, which I should be at liberty to dispose of in favour of such of my children as made themselves most worthy of my affection, in order to keep them more firmly attached to me. This goodness of the king merited my most grateful acknowledgments. However, this regulation which I have mentioned here was not made till the year 1600, and did not begin to take place till the year 1601.

---

* Joseph Scaliger, as well as our author, speaks of M. de Sancy as a fanatic, and as very subject to enthusiastic reveries.

Mademoiselle de Bourbon* died likewise this year: and monsieur d'Espinac,† archbishop of Lyons, who may be said to have tasted of all kinds of fortune; then madam la Connetable; and after her, madam de Beaufort: these two last deaths made a prodigious noise every where, and were attended with a great similarity of very uncommon circumstances; both were seized with a violent distemper, that lasted only three or four days; and both, though extremely beautiful, became horribly disfigured, which, together with some other symptoms, which at any other time would have been thought natural, or only the effects of poison, raised a report in the world, that the deaths of these two young ladies, as well as their elevation, was the work of the devil, who had now come to pay himself for the short felicity he had procured them. And this was certainly believed, not only amongst the people, generally credulous to a high degree of folly, but the courtiers themselves: so prevalent at that time was the infection of trading in the occult sciences, and so great were the hatred and envy to these two ladies, on account of the high rank they enjoyed.

---

* She was daughter to Henry I. prince of Condé, by his first wife, the princess of Nevers, marchioness de l'Isle, &c.

† Peter d'Espinac: he had been a great partisan of the league: however, P. Matthieu assures us, that he had done considerable services to Henry IV. against Spain, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 308, where he gives an eulogium of his virtues. M. de Thou, on the contrary, represents him, in book xc. as an incestuous and simoniacal person.

The following is what was related (as it is said) of the constable's* lady, by the ladies who were then at her house: She was conversing gaily with them in her closet, when one of her women entered in great terror, and told her that a certain person, who called himself a gentleman, and who had indeed a good appearance, saving that he was quite black, and of a gigantic stature, had just entered her anti-chamber, and desired to speak to her about affairs of great consequence, which he could not communicate to any but herself. At every circumstance relating to this extraordinary courier, which the woman was ordered to describe minutely, the lady was seen to turn pale, and was so oppressed with grief, that she could scarce tell her woman to entreat the gentleman, in her name, to defer his visit to another time; to which he replied, in a tone that filled the messenger with horror, that since the lady would not come willingly, he would take the trouble to go and seek her in her closet. She, who was still more afraid of a public than a private audience, resolved at last to go to him, but with all the marks of deep despair.

The terrible message performed, she returned to her company, bathed in tears, and half dead with dismay; she had only time to speak a few words to take leave of them, particularly of three ladies who were her friends, and to assure them that she should never see them more. That instant she was seized with exquisite pains, and died at the end of three days, inspiring all who saw her with horror at the frightful change of every feature in her face. Of this story the wise thought as they ought to think.

---

* Louisa de Budos, second wife to Henry, constable de Montmorency, was daughter to James de Budos, viscount de Portes.

Madam de Beaufort was the weakest of her sex with regard to divination; she made no secret of her consulting with astrologers, and always had a great many of them, who never quitted her; and what is most surprising, although she always, doubtless, paid them well, yet they never foretold her any thing but what was disagreeable: one said, that she would never be married but once; another, that she should die young; a third, that she should take care of being with child; and a fourth, that she should be betrayed by one of her friends. Hence proceeded that melancholy which oppressed her, and which she could never afterwards get rid of. Gracienne, one of her women, has since told me, that she would retire from all company to pass whole nights in grief, and in weeping, on account of these predictions.

Being then far advanced in her pregnancy, many persons will be at no loss to guess the cause of that misfortune which attended it. She was already greatly indisposed both in body and mind, when, at the latter end of Lent, she was desirous of making one of the party with the king at Fontainebleau: she staid there but a few days. The king, who was not willing to incur the censure of keeping this lady with him during the Easter holidays, intreated her to leave him to spend them at Fontainebleau, and to return herself to Paris.* Madam de Beaufort received this order with tears: it was still worse when they came to part; Henry, on his side, more passionately fond than ever of this lady, who had already brought him two sons, and a daughter, named Henrietta, did himself equal violence. He conducted her half-way to Paris;† and although they proposed only an absence of a few days, yet they dreaded the moment of parting, as if it had been for a much longer time. Those who are inclined to give faith to presages, will lay some stress upon this relation. The two lovers several times renewed their parting endearments, and in every thing they said to each other at that moment, some people have pretented to find proofs of those presages of an inevitable fate.

Madam de Beaufort spoke to the king as if for the last time;‡ she recommended to him her children, her house of Monçeaux, and her domestics: the king listened to her; but, instead of comforting her, gave way to sympathising grief. Again they took leave of each other, and a secret emotion again drew them to each other's arms. Henry would not so easily have torn himself from her, if the marshal d'Ornano, Roquelaure, and Frontenac, had not taken him away almost by force. At length they prevailed upon him to return to Fontainebleau; and the last words he said were to recommend his mistress to the conduct of La-Varenne, with orders to provide every thing she wanted, and to conduct her safely to the house of Zamet, to whom he had chosen to confide the care of a person so dear to him.

---

* According to P. Mathieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 316, she came to Paris, in order to have the articles of the purchase of Chateauneuf in Perche expedited.

† She lay at Melun the day before, whence the king conducted her to the boat in which she embarked to come down to the Arsenal.

‡ D'Aubigné speaks in the same manner of this parting, tom. liv. v. ch. iii.

I was at Paris when the dutchess of Beaufort arrived there; and intending to go with my wife a few days after to receive the communion at Rosny, whither I carried the prince and princes of Orange, to whom I was desirous of shewing the new buildings which the king's liberality had enabled me to raise there; I thought I was under a necessity of waiting upon the dutchess to take my leave of her. She no longer remembered any thing that had passed at Saint-Germain, but gave me a most obliging reception: not daring to explain herself clearly upon that compliance with her projects to which she so ardently wished to bring me, she contented herself with endeavouring to engage me in her interests, by mingling with those civilities which she shewed but to few persons, words that carried a double sense, and hinted to me a boundless grandeur, if I would relax a little of the severity of my counsels to the king with regard to her. I, who was as little moved with the chimeras that filled her head, as with those she thought to inspire me with, pretended not to understand any part of a discourse so intelligible; and answered her in equivocal terms, with general protestations of respect, attachment, and devotion, which signify what one will.

At my return home, I desired my wife to pay the same compliment to the dutchess: she was received with equal tenderness: madam de Beaufort intreating her to love her, and to be with her as a friend, entered into confidences that would have seemed the last instance of the most intimate friendship to those who, like madam de Rosny, were ignorant that the dutchess, who had no great share of understanding, was not very delicate in the choice of her confidants: it was her highest pleasure to entertain any person she first saw with her schemes and expectations; and the more those she conversed with were her inferiors, the less restraint she laid on herself; for then she no longer guarded her expressions, and often assumed the airs of a queen.

She had as little caution with respect to what really happened, as to what she was in expectation would happen; too much simplicity on such occasions gave rise probably to those reports which were spread concerning some irregularities in her conduct when she was very young. These censures, however, appeared to me to be the mere effect of the malice of her enemies; for it could not be imagined that a woman would carry her imprudence and folly so far as to say both good and ill of herself indifferently; and I never thought I had any reason to reproach myself with having confined in the Bastile, for six years, a woman named La Rouse, (who was one of her servants,) and her husband, who, after the death of this lady, continued to load her memory with the utmost infamy: for although all they said had been true, yet the respect that was due to her family, and still more to the tenderness the king had for her and the children she brought him, ought to have silenced their slanders.

Madam de Rosny could not help being surprised at the dutchess's discourse, and was still more so, when this lady, making an awkward assemblage of those civilities which are practised between equals, and the airs of a queen, told her she might come to her *coucher* and *lever* whenever she pleased, with many other expressions of the same kind. My wife, as well as every one else, concluded there would be a great change in the dutchess's fortune, and returned home full of those reflections, which she communicated to me. I had not even disclosed to my wife what had passed between the king and me upon this subject, nor the scene at St. Germain: I promised to acquaint her with the true state of things, provided she would not tell the princess of Orange what madam de Beaufort had said to her; and we set out together for Rosny.

Two days after, which was the Saturday before Easter, as I was performing my promise to madam de Rosny, and acquainting her with the dutchess's design to get herself declared queen, all the practices of her relations and dependants for that purpose, the struggles the king had in his own mind, and the resolution he had at length taken to overcome himself, adding some reflections upon the calamities which a contrary conduct would bring upon the kingdom, I heard the bell of the first gate of the castle without the moat ring; and none of my servants answering, as it was yet scarcely day, the bell was rung with more violence, and a voice several times repeated, *I come from the king!* I immediately awakened a footman, and while he went to open the gate, I slipped on a night-gown, and ran down stairs, greatly alarmed at being sent to so early in the morning.

The courier said that he had travelled all night to tell me that the king desired I would come instantly to Fontainebleau: his countenance had so deep a concern on it, that I asked him if the king was ill? "No," he replied, "but he is in the utmost affliction: madam the dutchess is dead." The news appeared to me so improbable that I made him repeat it several times; and when convinced that it was true, I felt my mind divided between grief for the condition to which her death reduced the king, and joy for the advantage all France would gain by it, which was increased by my being fully persuaded in my own mind, that the king, by this transitory sorrow, would purchase a release from a thousand anxieties, and much more anguish of heart than what he now actually suffered. I went up again to my wife's chamber full of these reflections, "You will neither go to the dutchess's *coucher* nor "*lever*," said I, "for she is dead." I brought the courier up with me, that, while I drest, and he breakfasted, he might inform us of all the circumstances of this great event, which was still better related in the letter la Varenne had written from Paris to the king, and which his majesty sent me by the courier, together with a second from la Varenne, directed to myself.

Zamet* had received his guest with all the assiduity of a courtier who is solicitous to please, and neglected nothing which he thought might contribute to make her pass the time agreeably. On Maundy-Thursday madam de Beaufort, after dinner, where she had eaten of the greatest delicacies, and all prepared to her taste, had an inclination to hear the evening service at St. Antony's the less: she was there seized with fainting fits, which obliged her to be carried back immediately to Zamet's. As soon as she arrived she went into the garden, where she was immediately attacked with an apoplectic fit, which it was expected would have instantly stifled her. She recovered a little, through the assistance they gave her; and strongly possessed with a notion that she was poisoned,* commanded them to carry her from that house to madam de Sourdis her aunt, who lived in the cloister of Saint Germain.

---

* Sebastian Zamet, a rich private gentleman, was an Italian, a native of Lucca: but he got himself naturalized in 1581, together with his two brothers, Horace and John-Antony. He desired the notary who drew up his daughter's contract of marriage, to style him lord of seventeen hundred thousand crowns. Henry IV. had pitched on his house for his meals and parties of pleasure: this prince besides loved him because he was a facetious and merry man.

Scarce had they time to put her in bed when thick succeeding convulsions, so dreadful as amazed all that were present, and in a word all the symptoms of approaching death, left Varenne, who had taken up the pen to write the king word of the accident which had happened, nothing else to say but that all the physicians, from the nature of the case, despaired of his mistress's life, as the most violent remedies were requisite, and the circumstance of her being far gone with child made all applications mortal.† Scarce had he sent away the letter when madam de Beaufort, drawing near her last moments, was seized with new convulsions, which turned her black, and disfigured her so horribly, that la Varenne, not doubting but the king, upon the receipt of his letter, would set out immediately to see his mistress, thought it better to send him word in a second note that she was dead, than to expose him to a spectacle at once so dreadful and afflicting as that of a woman whom he tenderly loved, expiring in agitations, struggles, and agonies, that left hardly any thing of human in her figure.

---

* D'Aubigné gives us to understand this, when he says, that after she had refreshed herself with Zamet, by eating a large citron, or, according to others, a sallad, "she immediately felt such an inflammation in her throat, and such violent twitchings in her "stomach, that, &c. But neither de Thou, Bassompierre, Le Septennaire, nor any other historian, imputes her disorder to poison. Le Grain ascribes it to the crude and cold juice of the citron. Sauval says, that he knew some old men who remembered to have seen the dutchess lie in state in the nunnery of Saint Germain.

† "The physician La Riviere, came in great haste upon this "occasion," says d'Aubigné, "with others of the king's physicians, "and entering but three steps into her chamber, when he saw the "extraordinary condition she was in, went away, saying to his "brother physicians, This is the hand of God." Tom. III. liv. v. c. 3.

La Varenne, in the letter he sent me by the same courier, informed me that the dutchess was not dead, but, by what he could judge, had not an hour to live;* in effect she expired in a few moments after, in so general a subversion of all the functions of nature as to inspire horror and dismay. The king, who upon the receipt of la Varenne's first letter, had not failed to mount his horse immediately, received the second when he had got half way to Paris, and listening to nothing but the excess of his passion, was resolved, notwithstanding all that could be said to him, to have the consolation of seeing his mistress once more,† though dead, as he believed her to be. The same persons who had carried him back the first time to Fontainebleau, prevailed upon him by their arguments and intreaties to return once more, and it was from this place that he dispatched the courier to me.

---

* Saturday morning, the convulsions had writhed her mouth to the back of her neck. Her body was opened, in which a dead child was found. See concerning her death, M. de Thou, liv. cxxii. Matthieu, ibid. Le Grain, liv. vii. Le Septennaire, ann. 1599. Mem. de Bassompierre. De Thou, Matthieu, and Bassompierre, place her death a day sooner.

† According to Bassompierre, who speaks of it as being an eye-witness, Henry did not believe that his mistress was yet dead. He says that la Varenne having come to acquaint the marshal d'Ornano and him, who had accompanied the dutchess to Paris, that she was just dead, they both took horse in order to carry the melancholy news to the king, and keep him from coming to Paris. "We "found" says he, "the king on the other side of La Saussaye, "near Vilejuif, coming on post horses with all expedition. As "soon as he saw the marshal, he suspected that he came to bring "him the news, which, as soon as he heard, he made great lamen-"tation for her. At length they prevailed with him to go into the "abbey La Saussaye, where they laid him upon a bed: when at last

I did not lose a moment. I breakfasted at Poissy, and dined at Paris. I made use of the archbishop of Glasgow's coach to carry me as far as Essonne, from whence I took post, and at night got to Fon-

---

" a coach coming from Paris, they put him into it, in order to re-" turn to Fontainebleau." Mem. de Bassompierre, tom. I. p. 69 et seq. Le Grain adds, that he fainted away in his coach between the arms of the master of the horse.

Without attempting, in any respect, to justify the excessive fondness of Henry IV. for this woman, justice obliges us to observe here, that this attachment was no less founded on the good qualities of her heart and mind than the beauty of her person, and that the antipathy only which is commonly borne towards such as are in the same condition, makes people say all the ill of her that we see related in these Memoirs and in the other historians. I will conclude this article with what d'Aubigné says, who is a writer naturally more inclined to blame than to commend: " It is a wonder," says he, " how this woman, whose great beauty had nothing of the " loose turn in it, could have lived rather like a queen than a mis-" tress for so many years, and that with so few enemies. The ne-" cessities of state were the only enemies she had to encounter." He had said before, that she used with great moderation her power over the king: and P. Matthieu adds, to the good qualities which he remarks in this lady, that of having often given very good counsel to Henry IV. ibid. " She would not suffer any other person near " her," says Le Grain also, liv. viii. " though the sieur de Lian-" court was a man of great merit and of a very honourable family: " insomuch that this marriage was dissolved before it was consum-" mated." Some accounts of that time speak of Nicholas d'Amerval, sieur de Liancourt, as a person of a truly distinguished birth, and of great fortune; but whose mind, say they, was as badly formed as his body. Mademoiselle d'Estrées married him only to get rid of the tyrannical treatment she received from her father, and because the king promised her that he would hinder the consummation of the marriage, and even dissolve it: which he actually did.

tainebleau. I went immediately to the king, who was walking in a gallery, sunk in an excess of grief that made all company insupportable: he told me that, although he expected the sight of me would at first increase his affliction, as in effect it did, yet he was sensible that in the condition to which the loss he had suffered had reduced him, he had so much need of consolation, that he did not hesitate a moment to send for me to receive the assistance I only could give him.

With a prince equally sensible of what he owed to religious and political duties, I was not at a loss for sources from whence to derive arguments to calm his sorrow. I recalled to his remembrance some of those passages in the holy scriptures, wherein God, as a father and master, requires that fortitude and perfect resignation, the effect of which is to inspire a Christian with a contempt for all sublunary things; to which I added such as might incite to the acknowledgments and adoration of divine Providence as well in deep misfortunes as unexpected success. I made no scruple to represent to Henry, that the event which now gave him all this affliction, was among the number of those which he would one day look upon as most fortunate. I endeavoured to place him, in imagination, in that painful, and (had his mistress lived) unavoidable situation, when, on one side struggling with the force of a tender and violent passion, and on the other with the silent convictions of what honour and duty required of him, he would be under an absolute necessity of coming to some resolution, with regard to an engagement, which he could not break without affliction, or preserve without infamy. Heaven, I told him, came to his assistance by a stroke, painful indeed, but which could only open the way to a marriage, upon which depended the tranquillity of France, the happiness of his people, the fate of Europe, and his own good, to whom the blessing of a lawful union would always appear too dearly purchased, by the desertion of a woman, who, by a thousand good qualities, was worthy of his affection.

I easily perceived that this last argument, inforced in a manner advantageous to his mistress, made an impression upon Henry's heart, by the soothing pleasure it gave him to hear his choice approved of. He confessed to me, that it was some relief to him to find me placing his attachment for the dutchess of Beaufort among the number of those which are formed by a real sympathy of minds, and not on mere libertinism; and that he had been apprehensive I would have no otherways endeavoured to comfort him, than by rendering him ashamed of his passion for her. This first conversation was very long. I do not remember every thing I said to the king. All I know is that, after having first applied those gentle soothings that affliction demands, the continuance of which I opposed by arguments drawn from the necessity all princes and persons in any public character are under, of preserving, even in the most reasonable cause of sorrows, that freedom of mind requisite for affairs of state; Henry had not the weakness to resign himself up to grief through obstinacy,* or to seek a cure in insensibility. He listened more to the dictates of his reason than his passion, and already appeared much less afflicted, to those persons who entered his chamber. At length every one being careful not to renew his grief, which his daily employments gradually diminished, he found himself in that state in which all wise men ought to be who have had great subject of affliction, that is, neither condemning, nor flattering the cause, nor affecting either to recall or banish the remembrance of it.

---

* Henry IV. made all the court go into mourning for the death of the dutchess of Beaufort. He himself was dressed in black for the first eight days, and aftewards in violet. Mem. de Chiverny.

Joyeuse likewise employed the public attention at this time, having from a soldier and a courtier* become a Capuchin, and afterwards from a Capuchin become again a soldier and a courtier, he resumed his inclination for the frock, which it was pretended the pope had only during the war granted him a dispensation for quitting; and this time he wore it till his death. The marriage of his daughter,† the sole heiress of the family of Joyeuse, to the duke of Montpensier, was the last action of his public life. The marchioness de Bellisle,* after his example, took the habit of a nun of the order of Saint Bernard.

---

* Henry de Joyeuse, count de Bouchage, and youngest brother of the duke de Joyeuse who was slain at Coutras. "As he was "passing through the streets of Paris one morning about four o'clock, "near the convent of the Capuchins, after he had spent the night "in a debauch, he imagined that he heard angels singing the matins "in the convent: at which being much affected, he immediately "turned Capuchin, under the name of Frere Ange. Afterwards he "quitted the frock and carried arms against Henry IV. at which "time the duke de Maïenne made him governor of Languedoc, a "duke, peer, and marshal of France. At last he made his peace "with the king: but one day this prince being with him on a balcony, under which was a great number of people assembled together, 'Cousin,' says Henry IV. to him, 'this multitude seems to "me to be very contented and easy at seeing together an apostate "and a renegado.' This saying of the king's made such an impression on Joyeuse that he entered again into his convent, where "he died." This anecdote is taken from the notes on the Henriade.

† Henrietta Catherine de Joyeuse. There survived of this marriage only one daughter, whereby the branch of Bourbon Montpensier became extinct.

---

* Antonietta d'Orleans-de-Longueville was the widow of Charles de Gondy, marquis of Bellisle, and eldest son of the marshal de Retz. Mezeray informs us that the reason of her retiring, was the mortification she had received by not being able to revenge the death of her husband; a soldier whom she had employed for this purpose having been taken and hanged, for she could not obtain his pardon of the king. The marquis de Bellisle had been killed in 1596 at Mount-Saint-Michel, by a gentleman of Bretagne, called Kermartin. L'Etoile speaks of her as a woman who was much admired by all the court on account of her beauty and understanding, and as an eminent example of devotion and penitence in her convent.

BOOK XI.

1599 to 1601.

I. Affairs of the marquisate of Saluces; artifices of the duke of Savoy to avoid making a restitution of Saluces. Journey of Henry IV. to Blois. Dissolution of his marriage with Margaret of Valois: his amours with mademoiselle d'Entragues, who persuades him to give her a promise of marriage: the courage and resolution of Rosny on this occasion. Articles of marriage with the princess of Florence concluded. Foreign affairs. Rosny takes upon him the guardianship of his nephew d'Epinoy. Revocation of the permission for manufacturing rich stuffs.—II. Rosny is made master-general of the ordnance, and gives great application to the affairs of this post. The duke of Savoy comes to Paris; brings over the courtiers to his interest; endeavours to bribe Rosny, and afterwards to exclude him from the conferences; but fails in both attempts, and returns home. Nicole Mignon attempts to poison the king. A public dispute betwixt the bishop d'Evreux and du-Plessis Mornay.—III. New subterfuges of the duke of Savoy: reasons for declaring war against him; preparations made by Rosny for this war. Henry IV. marries the princess of Florence by proxy; takes Chambéry, Bourg, Montmelian, Charbonnieres, &c. Other particulars of this campaign: great services performed there by Rosny, notwithstanding the jealousy and opposition of the courtiers.—IV. Cardinal Aldobrandin comes to negotiate a peace; Rosny's reception of him: the conferences broken off by the demolition of fort Saint-Catherine: resumed by Rosny; who concludes the treaty. The queen comes to Paris, and is received by Rosny at the Arsenal. Foreign affairs.

I. THE time settled for the agreement about the marquisate of Saluces, of which the terms were referred to the pope, had elapsed without any decision by his holiness, because the duke of Savoy, who knew better than any other person that it could not be favourable for him, had, to elude the sentence,* made use of all those arts that were generally practised in this little court, whose policy it was, when its safety or advantage was in question, to employ cunning, treachery, submission, and the appearance of the strongest attachments. The first thought that presented itself to the duke of Savoy's mind was to revoke an agreement which had only been made to gain time, or with a hope that France would embroil itself with the holy see; but as this proceeding seemed too disingenuous, he had recourse to another artifice to make the pope voluntarily resign the arbitration: he apprised his ambassador at Rome, that he had certain intelligence from France and Italy that Clement VIII. had suffered himself to be gained by the king, on private condition, that his most christian majesty should engage to yield afterwards to the pope himself all his claims upon the marquisate of Saluces. The ambassador, who was first imposed upon by his master, explained himself in such a manner upon this collusion, that his holiness, who had only accepted of the arbitration for the advantage of both parties, resigned it with indignation.

---

* This marquisate was a transferable fief of Dauphiné, to which the house of Savoy had no right.

The duke of Savoy, who had not doubted but that the pope would act in this manner, gave the king however, to understand, that he would rely entirely upon him, without having recourse to any foreign arbitration upon the dispute. He thought, by piquing this prince upon his honour, to obtain that which was the subject of their contest, which he took care to have represented to him as a thing of such small value, that it could not merit the attention of so great a king. And it was with these instructions that the sieurs de Jacob, de La-Rochette, de Lullins, de Bretons, and de Roncas, the duke of Savoy's agents, came to Paris.

With views of this nature, the minister and confident of the prince is commonly the person whom they begin to engage in their interest, or (to be plainer) whom they endeavour to corrupt; and if he should not appear very virtuous, do not even conceal from him the design with which they come, and in their discourse make no longer any use of that caution which is observed in a congress. These gentlemen, therefore, told me, that their master did not pretend to hold the marquisate of Saluces of his majesty any otherwise than as a mere gift of his munificence; and at the same time insinuated to me plainly enough, that this present would produce from the duke of Savoy advantages for me proportionable to the importance of the request, and my solicitude to secure its success. I would not seem to understand these last words; and with regard to the first, I told the agents drily, that since, as they well knew, no one could bestow upon another what was not immediately in his own possession, it was necessary the duke of Savoy should first begin by resigning all claim to the marquisate of Saluces; and that then his majesty, who, I assured them, had no less greatness of mind than his highness, would use his power royally. And I very earnestly intreated them to address themselves directly to the king; which they did, discouraged with the manner I spoke to them. Henry treated them with great civility, but appeared so resolute upon every thing that regarded the marquisate, that after several useless attempts, they laid aside all thoughts of succeeding this way.

Finding all France, and the court itself, filled with malecontents and mutinous persons, they imagined that by pushing them on to some violent resolution, they might give Henry sufficient employment within the kingdom, to make him lose sight of all that passed without. The duke of Savoy's presence appeared to them absolutely necessary to engage more closely those lords who listened to their suggestions, and they wrote to him, that his interest required that he should take a journey to Paris. This project was perfectly suited to the duke's character:* he consented to it, and ordered them to request his majesty's leave for that purpose, which the king would have denied, if he could have done it with any appearance of reason. But the duke of Savoy had deprived him of the least pretence, by protesting, that he undertook this journey in order that he might himself treat with his majesty: or rather, that he came to submit entirely to the king's will. This declaration he accompanied with so many complaints against Spain, that he seemed to be on the point of coming to an open rupture with that crown: and that henceforward he would place all his hopes of security on an union with France. He had a short time before refused an advantageous proposal made him by the king of Spain, to send his son and his eldest daughter to the court of Madrid, to appear there as princes of the blood-royal of Spain.

By this step of the duke of Savoy, the pope was fully determined to concern himself no further with the affairs of Saluces: but nothing could make the king neglect two things, which, from the very first appeared to him absolutely necessary; namely, to give up no part of that satisfaction which was due to him by the duke, and to discover all his transactions with the malecontents of his court. Among these, the king always gave marshal Biron the first rank. His majesty knew, that during the stay this marshal made in Guienne, he had solicited the nobility of that province to engage in his interests; and that at his own table he had had such conversations with them, as proved him to be an enemy to the royal authority. All this might have been attributed to the pride and insolence of his disposition; but what gave most weight to this behaviour was that his intrigues at the court of Savoy, although carried on with all possible caution, came at the same time to his majesty's knowledge; and the journey the king took this year to Blois, had in reality no other object than to disconcert the projects of Biron, and to retain the people in their duty; but in public, the king talked of it as a party of pleasure, to pass the summer in that agreeable climate, and to eat, he said, some of the excellent melons there. His removal from Paris, likewise, in the state things then were, was a matter of indifference.

---

* It is said, that this prince, during his residence at the court of France, one day let fall the following words, "I am not come into "this kingdom to reap, but to sow."

I attended his majesty, whose stay at Blois produced nothing of consequence enough to be mentioned: he passed his time there in the employment I have already mentioned, and in endeavouring to procure the so earnestly desired dissolution of his marriage with Margaret of Valois. As long as the dutchess of Beaufort lived, no one was solicitous to press Henry to a divorce, either because they apprehended that their endeavours would turn to the advantage of his mistress, who was universally hated, or that they did not care to expose themselves to the rage of this woman, who was always to be feared, even though her designs should not succeed: but as soon as she was dead, there was a general combination of the parliament, of all the other bodies, and of the people, to solicit him on this subject. The procuror-general came to his majesty, and intreated him to give his subjects this satisfaction. The king, though he was not determined upon his choice, promised, however, to yield to the desires of his people.

I now resumed my correspondence with queen Margaret with more ardour than before: I had taken no pains to remove the obstacle which this princess made, on madam de Beaufort's account, to the consent that was required of her; for I looked upon it as a resource to which, probably, every one must have applied; and it was this only that could have restrained the court of Rome, if the king had suffered himself at last to be gained by his mistress: besides, the compliance I observed in Margaret assured me that she did not make it a pretence for an absolute refusal. I was confirmed in this opinion by the answer she wrote me from Usson, to a letter I had just sent her, in which I mentioned the sacrifice that was expected from her, in very respectful but in very clear terms, as such negociations require. Margaret, on her side, to shew that she perfectly understood what was to be done, explained herself absolutely upon the bill of divorce, annexing to it such reasonable conditions as took away all difficulty for the future: she only desired a decent pension might be assigned her, and that her debts might be paid; appointing a man to conclude this affair, either with the king, or with me, who, though firmly attached to her, could not be suspected: this was Langlois, who had served his majesty so faithfully, in the reduction of the city of Paris, and had been rewarded for it with the post of master of the requests. It was not easy to find a man who was more capable of business: he brought his majesty an answer from Margaret;* for the king thought he likewise was under a necessity of writing to her, which he did with equal goodness and complaisance, but in terms far less explicit than I had done. With the letters, Langlois brought a statement of this princess's demands, which were immediately granted. To render the thing more firm, Langlois undertook to make her write to the pope in terms that gave his holiness to understand, that she was far from being constrained to this act; that she had the same solicitude for the conclusion of this affair as all France had. D'Ossat, provided with a writing of the same kind, found no more obstacles: he was seconded by Sillery, who endeavoured to efface the scandal of his first commission. The holy father used no more delays in granting the favour that was demanded of him, than what decency and ceremony required; and did not suffer himself to be influenced by suggestions of envious persons, a detestable sort of men who are to be found in every place. He appointed the bishop of Modena, his nephew and nuncio, to put the finishing hand to this affair, which could be only done in France, associating with him two commissioners of that nation, the archbishop of Arles, † and the cardinal de Joyeuse; the course they were to take, was to declare the parties free from all engagements by the nullity of their marriage.

---

* See these two letters of Henry IV. to Margaret de Valois and of Margaret's to Henry, in the New collection des Lettres d' Henry le Grand.

† Horace del Monte, the archbishop of Arles, and Francis de Joyeuse, the second son of William de Joyeuse. These three commissioners having met in the palace of Henry de Gondy, bishop of Paris, after maturely examining the reasons alleged on both sides, declared the marriage void, by reason of consanguinity, difference of religion, spiritual affinity, compulsion, and for want of the consent of one of the parties: for Henry IV. and Margaret de Valois were related in the third degree, the mother of Jane d'Albert, who also was called Margaret, being the sister of Francis I. See the history and pieces concerning this divorce in Matthieu, tom. II. b. ii. De Thou, liv. cxxiii. La Chronologie Septennaire, ann. 1599.

While this affair was hastening towards a conclusion, Henry returned to Fontainebleau; and giving great part of his time to diversions, and the pleasures of the table, heard mademoiselle d'Entragues* often mentioned. The courtiers, eager to flatter his inclination for the fair, spoke so advantageously of the beauty, wit, and sprightliness of this young lady, that the king had a desire to see her, and became immediately passionately enamoured of her. Who could have foreseen the uneasiness this new passion was to give him! but it was Henry's fate, that the same weakness which obscured his glory, should likewise destroy the tranquillity of his life.

The lady was no novice: although sensible of the pleasure of being beloved by a great king, yet ambition was her predominant passion; and she flattered herself she might make so good a use of her charms, as to oblige her lover to become her husband. She did not therefore seem in haste to yield to his desires; pride, chastity, and interest, were employed in their turns; she demanded no less than one hundred thousand crowns for the price of her favours; and perceiving that she had only increased Henry's passion, by an obstacle, in my opinion, much more likely to cool it, since his majesty was obliged to tear this sum from me by violence, she no longer despaired of any thing, and had recourse to other artifices; she alleged the restraint her relations kept her in, and the fear of their resentment.* The prince endeavoured to remove all these scruples, but could not satisfy the lady, who taking a favourable opportunity, at length declared that she would never grant him any thing, unless he would give her a promise, under his hand, to marry her in a year's time. It was not upon her own account, she said (accompanying this strange request with an air of modesty, with which she well knew how to inflame the king), that she asked for this promise; to her a verbal one had been sufficient, or, indeed, she would have required none of any kind, being sensible that her birth did not allow her to pretend to that honour, but that she would have occasion for such a writing, to serve as an excuse for her fault to her relations; and observing that the king still hesitated, she had the address to hint, that in reality she should look upon this promise as of very little consequence, knowing well the king was not to be summoned to a court of justice like one of his subjects.

---

* Catherine Henrietta, daughter to Francis de Balzac, lord of Entragues, Marcoussy, and de Malesherbes, by Mary Touchet, mistress to Charles IX. whom he married for his second wife. The writings of those times represent her as not so beautiful, though younger, than the fair Gabrielle, and still more gay, ambitious, and enterprizing. This sketch, which corresponds with what the duke de Sully says here, will be very much confirmed in the sequel of these Memoirs.

What a striking example of the tyranny of love! Henry was not so dull but that he plainly perceived this girl endeavoured to deceive him: not to mention likewise those reasons he had to believe her far from being a vestal, or those intrigues against the state of which her father, mother, her brother, and even herself, had been convicted, and which had drawn upon this family an order to leave Paris, which I had so lately signified to them from his majesty; notwithstanding all this, the king was weak enough to comply with his mistress's desires, and promised to grant her request.

---

* This fear was not entirely without foundation. If we may believe the marshal de Bassompierre, in his Memoirs, her mother was indeed very condescending in this affair; and it was even she who drew the king to Malesherbes, a house where she lived: but her father was not so complying, any more than the count d'Auvergne, half-brother, by the mother, to the lady. They wished to pick a quarrel with the count de Lude, whom Henry IV. employed upon this occasion; and they carried the lady to Marcoussis, where the king nevertheless went to see her. Tom. I.

One morning, when he was preparing to go to the chase, he called me into the gallery at Fontainebleau, and put this shameful paper into my hands. It is a piece of justice, which I am so much the more obliged to do Henry, as the reader must perceive that I do not endeavour to palliate his faults, to acknowledge that in the greatest excesses to which he was hurried by his passions, he always submitted to a candid confession of them, and to consult with those persons whom he knew were most likely to oppose his designs. This is an instance of rectitude and greatness of soul, rarely to be found amongst princes. While I was reading this paper, every word of which was like the stab of a poniard, Henry sometimes turned aside to conceal his confusion, and sometimes endeavoured to gain over his confidant by condemning and excusing himself by turns; but my thoughts were wholly employed upon the fatal writing. The clause of marrying a mistress, provided she bore him a son in the space of a year (for it was conceived in these terms) appeared indeed ridiculous, and plainly of no effect; but nothing could relieve my anxiety, on account of the shame and contempt the king must necessarily incur, by a promise which, sooner or later, would infallibly make a dreadful confusion. I was also afraid of the consequences of such a step in the present conjuncture, whilst the divorce was depending; and this thought rendered me silent and motionless.

Henry, seeing that I returned him the paper coldly, but with a visible agitation of mind, said to me, "Come, come, speak freely, and do not assume "all this reserve." I could not immediately find words to express my thoughts, nor need I here assign reasons for my perplexity, which may be easily imagined by those who know what it is to be the confidant of a king, on occasions when there is a necessity for combating his resolution, which is always absolute and unalterable. The king again assured me, that I might say and do what I pleased without offending him; which was but a just amends, he said, for having forced from me three hundred thousand livres. I obliged him to repeat this assurance several times, and even to seal it with a kind of oath; and then no longer hesitating to discover my opinion, I took the paper out of the king's hands and tore it to pieces, without saying a word. "How!" said Henry, astonished at the boldness of this action, "*Morbieu!* what do you mean to do? I think you "are mad." "I am mad, I acknowledge, sire," replied I, "and would to God I were the only mad-"man in France." My resolution was taken, and I was prepared to suffer every thing rather than, by a pernicious deference and respect, to betray my duty and veracity; therefore, notwithstanding the rage I saw that instant impressed on the king's countenance, while he collected together out of my hands the torn pieces of the writing, to serve as a model for another, I took advantage of that interval to represent to him, in a forcible manner, all that the subject may be imagined to suggest to me. The king, angry as he was, listened till I had done speaking; but, overcome by his passion, nothing was capable of altering his resolution; the only effort he made was not to banish from his presence a confidant who acted too sincerely. He went out of the gallery without saying a single word to me, and returned to his closet, whither he ordered Lomenie to bring him ink and paper; he came out again after some minutes, which he had employed in writing a new promise. I was at the foot of the staircase when he descended: he passed by without seeming to see me, and went to Malesherbes to hunt, where he staid two days.

I was of opinion that this incident ought to put no stop to the affair of the divorce, nor hinder another wife from being sought out for the king, but rather that it should hasten both: his majesty's agents at Rome made therefore the first overtures for a marriage between Henry and the princess Mary of Medicis,* daughter to the grand duke of Florence. The king suffered us to proceed in this business, and, by the force of repeated importunities, even appointed the constable, the chancellor, Villeroi, and I, to treat with the person whom the grand duke should send to Paris. We were resolved not to let the affair sleep. Joannini, the person deputed by the grand duke, was no sooner arrived, than the articles were instantly drawn up and signed by us all.

I was pitched upon to communicate this news to the king, who did not expect the business would have been concluded so suddenly. As soon as I replied to his question from whence I came, "We "come, sire, from marrying you," this prince remained a quarter of an hour as if he had been struck with a thunderbolt. He afterwards walked up and down his chamber hastily, delivering himself up to reflections with which his mind was so violently agitated, that for a long time he could not utter a word. I did not doubt but that all I had represented to him had now a proper effect. At length, recovering himself like a man who had taken his resolution, "Well!" said he, rubbing his hands together, "well, *depardieu!* be it so, there is no "remedy: if for the good of my kingdom I must "marry, I must." He acknowledged to me, that the fear of succeeding no better in his second than his first marriage was the cause of his irresolution. Strange caprice of the human mind! A prince who had extricated himself with glory and success from a thousand cruel dissensions, which war and policy had occasioned, trembled at the very thoughts of domestic quarrels, and seemed more troubled than when, that very year, upon notice sent from a capuchin of Milan,* an Italian, who had come to Paris with an intention to poniard him, was seized in the midst of the court. The marriage, though concluded on, was not solemnized till the following year.

---

* Mary de Medicis, daughter to Francis, grand duke of Tuscany by the archdutchess Jane of Austria, daughter to the emperor Ferdinand. She had for her portion six hundred thousand crowns, besides rings and jewels. La Chronologie Septennaire, anno 1600, p. 121, and Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 336, give an account of the negociations of d'Ossat and Sillery, relating to this marriage.

Other foreign affairs which happened this year, and which remain to be mentioned, are these; the war in the Low Countries, which was vigorously begun when the archduke went into those provinces; the king, upon reiterated complaints from Spain, forbad his subjects to bear arms in the service of the States, but this was merely for form's sake, policy not permitting him to suffer the Flemings to be oppressed. His majesty not only forbore to punish those who disobeyed these orders, but likewise assisted that people privately: the war in Hungary, which I shall say nothing of, except that the duke of Mercœur asked and obtained leave to serve in the troops of the emperor Rodolph; the revolution that happened in Sweden, where the then reigning king, and elected one of Poland,* was dethroned by his subjects (who put his uncle Charles duke of Sudermania in his place), and lost all hope of ever being restored by the defeat he received from his rival.

---

* His name was Frere Honorio. Henry IV. thanked him himself for it, and caused several advantageous offers to be made him by his ambassador at Rome. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 302.

With respect to my own personal affairs, the following was the most considerable. This year, the princess d'Epinoi † came to me when I was at Blois, to engage my interest with the king against the princes of Ligne, who had attempted to usurp her estate, and that of her children. These children were five in number, four of whom, three sons and her eldest daughter, she had brought with her; the youngest was educated under the care of madam de Roubais, widow of the viscount de Gand, her uncle and mine. The princess told me, that the nearest relation by the father's side, which her children had in France, being myself, it was fit I should be their guardian. I willingly accepted of this trust, to procure them justice; and had the satisfaction, at the end of seven years, during which time I took the same care of these children as of my own, to restore to them the possession of all their estates, which amounted to a hundred and twenty thousand livres a year. I shall have occasion, hereafter, to take notice of the obligations they received from his majesty.

---

* Sigismond. This misfortune befel him for attempting to re-establish the Catholic religion in Sweden. See, with regard to all these foreign affairs, De Thou, le Septennaire, and other historians, an. 1599.

† Hippolite de Montmorency, widow of Peter de Melun, prince d'Epinoi, died in 1594. The princes de Ligne, of whom he speaks here, were l'Amoral prince de Ligne, governor of Artois, that married Mary de Melun, who had the seigniories of Roubais, d'Antoing, &c. and his brothers.

About the same time the merchants of Tours came to entreat my assistance in procuring leave for them to establish manufactures of silks, and of gold and silver stuffs, which had not yet been made in France, together with a prohibition to import any from foreign countries for the future, assuring me that they had sufficient to supply the whole kingdom. Before I gave them their answer, I required time to examine if their report was true; and being convinced it was not, I endeavoured to dissuade them from an enterprise which could not miscarry with impunity: I could not prevail. Upon my refusal they addressed themselves directly to his majesty. I thought it necessary not to oppose an establishment, which, if well conducted, might be of great use. The king, overcome by their importunity, granted all they asked; but six months had scarce passed, when, for want of having taken proper measures, they came to get their commissions revoked, which had given general discontent, on account of the inconveniency and increase of expense to the purchasers, which had been produced by this new regulation.*

---

* The murmurings of the bankers and the public farmers of the revenue, whose profits the new prohibition had considerably diminished, likewise contributed not a little to its revocation. Chronologie Septennaire, p. 94. an. 1599. The case is the same with regard to these stuffs as all the other parts of traffic. The freedom of trade which should subsist between all the nations of the world, will not give us, in this respect, any advantage over our neighbours, farther than we can find out the methods of manufacturing these stuffs ourselves of a more beautiful, finer, or cheaper fabric. Even at this day a great number of foreigners take them off our hands, and the pro-

II. The king, believing the affair of the marquisate of Saluces would not be finished without striking a blow for it, had, for some time, thought of getting a man to perform the duties of master-general of the ordnance, who was capable of acquitting himself well of them, and above all, of acting by himself; this good old d'Estrées was not able to do: however, his majesty would not take away the post from him for his children's sake, of whom monsieur d'Estrées was the grandfather: but the expedient he hit upon was, that the elder de Born, being desirous of resigning the post of lieutenant-general of the ordnance, I might treat with him for it, and unite the duties of that employment to those of the master-general of the ordnance, although I was not invested with this last. He even offered, in my favour, to augment the privileges of the first, already very considerable, by raising it into an office, giving it authority over all the lieutenant-generals in the provinces, augmenting the salary, and lastly, by granting the patents gratis. However, I must acknowledge, that I was not to be won by these offers, and could not resolve to serve under another, after having been disappointed of the first place; I therefore excused myself, upon the business I was already charged with, from not complying with the king's intentions. The king was not to be imposed upon by this answer, and, after many solicitations which I knew how to defend myself against, he left me in anger, telling me that he would mention it to me no more, but that since I would listen to nothing but my own caprice, he would take his own way.

---

hibition is in force only as to Indian stuffs and printed linens; but it were to be wished that we would be more careful to forbear the use of the latter, or rather make in France such stuffs as would serve instead of those which are so commodious and serviceable.

His kindness for me made him that moment forget his threat. He caused a proposal to be made to monsieur d'Estrées to resign his employment, which being informed of, I offered, by monsieur and madam du Peche, three thousand crowns to madam de Nery, who governed the old man entirely, to procure his consent; the master-general of the ordnance being importuned by this woman, told the king, that he was willing to accept of an equivalent for his post. The king immediately acquainted me with his resolution, adding, that he required nothing of me for the offence I had given him, but to put his artillery into a condition to obtain the marquisate of Saluces for him, which, he was every day more convinced, would not be yielded without force, that is to say, without a great number of very difficult sieges; for that is the usual way of carrying on a war in Savoy. I thanked his majesty, and agreed with d'Estrées for eighty thousand crowns; all these petty claims arising to a considerable sum more, I was, on this occasion, obliged to take up rents to the value of a hundred thousand crowns from Morand, Vienne, and Villemontée; and three days afterwards I was solemnly invested with the dignity * of master-general of the ordnance, and took the usual oaths. This was the fourth great office with which I was

---

* The king declared it an office of the crown, and that in favour of M. de Sully. Brantome, in the place where he gives us the list of the masters-general, speaks thus, "Since monsieur de Rosny has "had this charge of master-general, who undoubtedly does the place "so much honour, the Arsenal is in very good order, owing to his "great capacity and application, especially as the importance of the "thing itself and his own good sense would have it so. Witness "what he performed in the last war with Savoy, where, in a short "time, he gave proof of very quick dispatch and diligence, by being "sooner in the field than he was expected." Vies des Hommes illustres, art. M. *Rosny*, tom. I. p. 227, 228.

then honoured; the annual produce of it was twenty-four thousand livres. I thought myself obliged, in gratitude to his majesty for this last instance of his bounty, to bestow all my cares on the artillery. I visited the Arsenal, where every thing seemed to me in such a miserable condition, that I resolved to take up my residence there, that I might apply myself wholly towards its re-establishment, although this castle was then very ill built, and destitute of every conveniency.

The affairs of the artillery were still worse. I began by a reform of the officers of this body, who, not having the slightest notion of their business, were, in fact, only the servants of the officers of the court of justice. I cashiered about five hundred of them at one stroke. I conferred next with the commissaries for saltpetre, and agreed with them for a considerable provision of powder, which I shewed to the king. I treated likewise with the masters of great iron-works, for iron to make carriages and bombs; with foreign merchants for the metal; and with cart-wrights and carpenters, for the wood-work necessary for the designs I had formed. His majesty came to visit his arsenal himself, fifteen days after I was settled there; and these visits became afterwards one of his chief amusements: he took pleasure in seeing all the preparations that were making there, and the extreme diligence with which I applied myself to them. This diligence indeed was no more than necessary in the present posture of affairs in Savoy, the detail of which, and that of the war they produced, will make up the subject of these Memoirs during the whole of the following year. It was at the end of this, that the duke of Savoy left his own dominions to come into France with those intentions I have already mentioned, but they were too well known to produce the effects he had promised himself from his artifices. The reflections which the past conduct of this prince, together with that of his agents, and a knowledge of his character, gave rise to, were far from being favourable to him. There was likewise something still more positive against him: Lesdiguieres had sent advice to his majesty, that the duke was fortifying his castles and towns with great care, especially those of Bresse, and furnishing them with ammunition and provisions. It was known, by means of the count de Carces and the sieur du Passage, that he had strongly solicited the court of Madrid, and pressed the pope, to procure a second reference of the affair; representing to him, that it was the interest of all Italy not to suffer his most christian majesty to possess any thing beyond the Alps. The French residents at Florence sent advice, that the duke's purpose, by coming into France, was to circumvent the king; who, on his side, was persuaded, that it was M. de Savoy himself who would be the dupe, not only of him, but of the king of Spain and other princes of Italy; for these last were at no pains to conceal their dislike of the duke of Savoy's ambitious and restless spirit: and the king of Spain had not forgot the public complaints he made, that while they gave the Low Countries and Franche Comté, of more value than the two Castiles and Portugal, as a portion for one of their infantas, the other, whom he had married, had nothing but a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary. Many other indecent sallies of the like nature, followed by reciprocal complaints, had absolutely ruined their former good understanding.

The event proved the justness of those observations which the letter the king shewed me from

Lesdiguieres occasioned; but in public he shewed no resentment at what he had learned of the duke's proceedings; he even ordered me to spare no expense to give him such a reception at Lyons as is due to foreign sovereigns. The duke, I believe, had no cause to complain of me upon this account: but messieurs the counts of Saint-John did not act in the same manner; they denied him certain honours which the dukes of Savoy claimed in the assembly of canons as counts of Villars.* It was at Fontainebleau and at Paris where the shew was most magnificent.† The duke of Savoy, on his part, appeared with a splendour suitable to his rank.

Three days after his arrival at Paris, the king, who was desirous of shewing him the new regulations in the Arsenal, sent me notice that he would come and sup there with the duke, and the chief lords and ladies of his court. The duke of Savoy came so long before, that I could not impute such extraordinary haste to mere accident. He desired to see the magazines, which was not what I wanted; I was ashamed of the poverty of the old magazines, and therefore carried him into the new work-houses. Twenty cannons lately cast, and as many more in readiness for it, forty completely mounted, and several other works which he saw carrying on with great diligence, surprised him so much, that he could not help asking me what I meant by all these preparations? Sir, replied I, smiling, to take Montmelian. The duke, without showing any indications that this reply had a little disconcerted him, asked with an air of gaiety and freedom, if I had ever been there; and upon my answering him in the negative, "Truly, I thought so," said he, "or you "would not have talked of taking it; Montme-"lian is impregnable." I answered in the same tone, that I would not advise him to oblige the king to make the attempt, because I was very certain Montmelian would, in that case, lose the title of impregnable.

---

* It was by order of the king, according to F. Matthieu, vol. II. b. ii. p. 323, that the canons of Lyons refused the duke of Savoy the place of honorary canon in their cathedral, which they had granted to the former duke his father, and that for a very obvious reason, the house of Savoy having since that time lost possession of the earldom of Villars. This ceremony consisted in presenting some sacred vestments to the duke at the entrance of the cloister, and giving him rank in the church among the canons.

† Notwithstanding this magnificent reception, the duke of Savoy, after the first conference he had with Henry IV. became sensible that he was not likely to obtain his demand. "I have delivered "my message," says he, "and may now go whenever I will." Matthieu sur le voyage de ce prince en France, tom. II. liv. ii.

These words gave our conversation immediately a very serious turn. The duke of Savoy taking occasion to mention the affairs which brought him into France, had already, in a polite manner, begun to make me sensible that he knew I was not in his interest, when we were interrupted by the arrival of his majesty, and afterwards nothing was thought of but pleasure. However, the same night commissioners were named for examining the occasion of the contest: the constable, the chancellor, marshal Biron, Meisse, Villeroi, and myself, were appointed for the king; and for the duke of Savoy, Belly his chancellor, the marquis de Lullin, the sieurs de Jacob, the count de Morette, the chevalier de Brétons, and des Allymes.

The duke of Savoy had already brought over the greater part of our commissioners to his interests: he gained them completely at last, by the liberal gifts which he bestowed both on them and the whole court at the opening of the new year.* But I was the person who gave him most trouble; for every time, that the question was debated amongst the commissioners, I constantly held firm to this determination, either that a restitution should be made to his majesty of the marquisate of Saluces, or that Bresse, and all the border of the Rhône from Geneva to Lyons, should be given him in exchange. But for the apparent incivility of such a proceeding, they would have solicited my exclusion from their meetings: therefore they had again recourse to an attempt to gain me, which they resolved to do at any price whatever.

On the 5th of January, des Allymes† came to make me the usual compliments, in the name of his highness: he intreated me, with great politeness, to attend to his master's reasons; that is, in plain terms, to approve of them; for at the same time that he made me this request, he presented me with his highness's picture, in a box enriched with diamonds of fifteen or twenty thousand crowns value. To assist me in making a composition with my conscience, he told me, that this picture came from a daughter of France; and while he perceived me busy in admiring the brilliants, added, that it was given me by a prince whose attachment to the king was equal to his friendship for me. I still kept the picture in my hand, and asked des Allymes what were the proposals he had to make me? He, who thought the decisive moment was now come, immediately displayed his whole stock of eloquence, and, for want of good reasons, endeavoured to prove the advantage that was to be gained by the pretended rupture of his master with Spain, who offered to assist the king in conquering Naples, Milan, and the empire itself. All this cost him nothing; and to hear him, one would have thought that he had been able to dispose absolutely of those dominions, for which, he added, that he did not doubt but the king would yield willingly to the duke a paltry marquisate.

---

* The duke sent the king two large basons and two crystal vases, as a new-year's gift. "In return for which, the king gave "the duke a crotchet of diamonds, where, among others, was one "with his majesty's picture: it was a very fine piece, and the duke "had a great value for it: he made presents to all who came to "compliment him." Chronologie Septen. ann. 1600. It was said that he had gained over the dutchess of Beaufort to his interest; so that if this lady had not died, it is probable the restitution of Saluces might have been dispensed with. The duke of Savoy playing at primero with Henry, on a bet of 4000 pistoles, the king neglected his play, supposing that he had already won the game: but the duke, who had it in his own hand, contented himself with shewing the cards to the dukes of Guise and d'Aubigné, who were present, and then shuffled them together. It is d'Aubigné that relates this circumstance of the duke's generosity or policy.

† René de Lucinge des Allymes, ambassador from Savoy to the court of France.

I could no longer keep silence. I told des Allymes, that if the king demanded the marquisate of Saluces to be restored to him, it was not on account of its value, since that was very inconsiderable; but that he could not in honour suffer the crown to be dismembered of one of its ancient domains, and which had been usurped at a time when the duke of Savoy, having received the highest obligations from Henry III. at his return from Poland, ought in gratitude to have abstained from it. I thanked the deputy for his obliging expressions in my favour; and to repay his compliments with others, assured him, that when the duke of Savoy had made an absolute restitution of Saluces, I would not forget to use my interest with his majesty, to engage him to procure those opulent kingdoms for the duke which he had offered to the king, and which would be much more convenient for him than his majesty. Saying this, I opened the box, and after praising the workmanship and the materials, I told des Allymes, that the great value of the present was the only reason which hindered me from accepting it; but that if he would allow me to return the box and the diamonds, I would keep the picture with great pleasure, in remembrance of so obliging a prince. Accordingly, I separated the box and diamonds from the picture; when des Allymes telling me that it did not belong to him to make any alterations in his master's presents, I intreated him to take back the whole, and he left me in despair of ever being able to engage me in his master's interest, and appeared but little satisfied with my behaviour.

All that remained now to be done was to exclude me from their meetings. Upon his majesty's refusing to gratify them in this request, the duke of Savoy took it in his head to desire, that the patriarch* of Constantinople might assist at these meetings in the name of the pope, which the king agreed to, not thinking of the artifice concealed under this proposition. The next day, the king having an inclination to play at tennis, appointed the assembly to be held at the constable's house, because he could conveniently make his party when he went from thence, after he had seen the conference begun: but before he left us, he exhorted all the commissioners to have a strict regard to justice; and whispering me in particular, "Take care of

---

* Father Bonaventure de Calatagirone, general of the Cordeliers, and the pope's nuncio.

" every thing," said he, " and do not suffer them " to impose upon you."

Upon the king's departure, I found, that instead of taking their seats, they divided into parties, two and three together, the nuncio sometimes conferring with one set, sometimes with another, not suffering the business to be entered upon regularly; and, above all, carefully avoiding to say any thing to me. At length Bellievre told me, that the good patriarch could not subdue his scruples about conversing with an Huguenot; and intreated me, in the name of the assembly, to absent myself, since nothing could be done while I was present. I instantly comprehended the cause of this behaviour; and bowing profoundly, withdrew, intending to go and give the king an account of what had passed. I met him in the gallery, where he had stopped to speak to Bellengreville: he asked me, with some surprise, if all was over already? and upon my acquainting him with the truth of the matter, he fell into a great rage, and ordered me to return to the commissioners, and tell them, that if there was any person amongst them to whom my presence was displeasing, it was his business to withdraw, not mine. I disturbed a little the joy of the assembly, by repeating this new order of the king. The measures they took were, to waste the hours in seeking for expedients, till dinner-time approached; and then they deferred entering upon the question till the afternoon. But notwithstanding all their endeavours with his majesty, I continued still in the number of the commissioners, and the nuncio was obliged to vanquish his reluctance.

Brétons and Roncas turned themselves on every side, to avoid yielding to a restitution of the marquisate; they offered to do homage for it to his majesty, and if that was not sufficient, to hold Bresse upon the same conditions. I easily rendered all these proposals ineffectual, and got it unanimously declared, to give the duke of Savoy this alternative, either to resign Saluces to the king, or, in its place, the county of Bresse as far as the river Dain, the vicarship of Barcelonette, the valley of Sture, that of Perouse, and Pignerol; in which case, all the towns and fortresses taken on both sides were to be restored.*

The duke of Savoy expected a quite different conduct from the commissioners; but the truth is, they dared not openly oppose a determination which they knew to be the king's: all the resource they had left was, to join with the courtiers in supporting the interests of the duke of Savoy, and who were continually representing to the king, that he ought not to act too rigorously with a prince, whose alliance might be purchased at a very inconsiderable price, and would be much more advantageous than a fief of no value, and which would be very difficult to preserve. The alternative they offered the duke of Savoy afforded them a pretence for granting him six months to come to a determination: he desired eighteen; and I maintained, there was no necessity for any delay. I went to his majesty to acquaint him with this resolution, which was taken in spite of me, and represented to him the great inconveniency of giving the duke of Savoy so long a time to renew his correspondences, and to prepare for war. Henry, prejudiced by the discourse of the courtiers on the necessity of granting a delay to the duke of Savoy, asked me how it was possible to do otherwise? "By granting the duke of Savoy," said I, "an honourable escort of fifteen thousand "foot, two thousand horse, and twenty cannon, "to conduct him to Montmelian, or what other "place he shall choose to go to, and there oblige "him to explain himself upon the alternative that "has been proposed to him." The king did not approve of my advice; his word was given to the contrary: I was truly grieved at it; for I have been always firmly persuaded, that, but for this compliance, his majesty might have avoided a war, and have received complete satisfaction. All I could obtain was, that instead of six months, three only should be granted.

---

* A kind of agreement was concluded upon this plan between the commissioners, which it was much suspected the duke of Savoy would not observe, because of the delays he desired: whereupon, as Le-Grain relates, some one proposed to Henry, that the duke of Savoy should be seized, and by that means obliged to perform his part of the articles; but this proposal was rejected by the king. See the particulars of the negociation, and of the duke's residence at Paris, in M. de Thou, and in Le Septennaire, an. 1599, 1600.

The duke of Savoy, finding that his majesty, who was weary of the continual solicitations made to him on this subject, would no longer answer otherwise than in these few words, *I am resolved to have my marquisate,* set out a little time after for Chambery, where, till the expiration of the time prescribed, which was in the month of June, he employed himself in preparations for his defence. He would have had no occasion for them, if the plot of a woman, named Nicole Mignon had succeeded. She had undertaken to poison the king,* and thought to have engaged the count of Soissons, (who, on all occasions, made known his discontent,) in her design; but he conceived so great an horror at it, that he discovered her immediately: she confessed her crime, and was burnt.

---

* By procuring her husband to be admitted into the number of the king's cooks, through the interest of the count de Soissons, steward of the household. She was well known to all the princes of the blood, and to Henry himself, at St. Denis, where she kept one of the principal inns during the war. The count of Soissons, to whom she had hinted, that it would be his own fault if he was not one of the greatest princes in the world, suspecting that this

Nothing remarkable happened during the three months, except the dispute between messieurs du Perron and du Plessis. Towards the latter end of the last year, appeared a book* by du Plessis upon

---

woman had some bad design, caused Lomenie to conceal himself in a closet, which gave him an opportunity of discovering what means she intended to use. She was accused of practising sorcery, but was only a profligate woman, and somewhat disordered in her senses. Chronologie Septennaire, anno 1600.

* This book is intitled, *Instructions de la Sainte Eucharistie*, and attacks the mass by pretended arguments drawn from the fathers. As soon as it appeared in public, many Catholic divines exclaimed against the falsehood of a great number of the quotations it contained. This obliged du Plessis to offer a kind of challenge, which those doctors prevailed upon the bishop of Evreux to accept. After several letters and steps taken on both sides to settle the method in which they were to proceed, and in which it appears that du Plessis repented more than once of having gone so far, the king determined that there should be a public dispute between the two antagonists, wherein fifty of these passages were to be made good every day, till all the five hundred and fifty were gone through, which M. du Perron had excepted against. They met in the council chamber at Fontainebleau, in the presence of the king, and commissioners appointed by him: those for the Catholics were the president de Thou, the advocate Pithou, and the sieur Martin, reader and physician to his majesty; for the Calvinists, Fresne-Canaye, and Casaubon. They met on Thursday the 4th of May, at one o'clock in the afternoon. Of sixty-one passages which du Perron sent to his antagonist, the latter was only prepared for nineteen of them, which he had selected from all the rest: "As to these," said he to the king, "I will lose my reputation or life, if one of them be found "false." However, he was convicted of an unfair representation in all those that were examined: and they could only go through nine of them: the chancellor then declared the opinions of all present, upon these nine articles severally, that in the first, which was

the eucharist, which was looked upon, by the Protestant party, to be a master-piece, and which I sent immediately to the bishop of Evreux, who was at his diocese: the difference of religion had never

---

from Scotus, and the second from Durandus, du Plessis had taken the objection for the answer; in the third and fourth from St. Chrysostom, and the fifth from Jerom, that he had omitted some of the most material words; in the sixth, that it was no where to be found in St. Cyril; on the seventh, which was taken from the Code, that it was indeed from Crinitus, but that Crinitus had falsified the text: as to the eighth, which included two propositions from St. Bernard, that du Plessis ought to have separated them, or at least to have put an *&c.* between: with regard to the ninth from Theodoret, that it was mutilated, and that the word idols was taken for images. This was the only conference that was held. Du Plessis Mornay, being seized with an indisposition next day, went to Saumur some days after, without taking leave of the king. Fresne-Canaye, one of the commissioners, and Saint Marie-du-Mont, another eminent Protestant, were soon after this dispute, in which Henry himself sometimes spoke, converted to the Catholic faith. Du Plessis pretended to prove, by the authority of St. Cyril, that it was not a custom among the primitive Christians to adore the cross, and yet he alleged the reproach which the emperor Julian throws on them upon this very account. "It is not very likely," returned the king, "that Julian the apostate would have reproached the "Christians for adoring the cross, if they had not actually done so; "otherwise he would have exposed himself to be laughed at." It was the king likewise who said, that at least an *&c.* ought to have been put in the passage from St. Bernard.

A Catholic having observed to a Calvinist, that du Perron had already gained several passages of du Plessis, "No matter," answered the Protestant, "provided that of Saumur be still left to "him." Matthieu, ib. This fact, which is told in the same manner in several polemical treatises, is generally attested by all our good historians, and even by those who treat the Protestants most favourably, M. de Thou, liv. cxxiii. p. 843, who was himself one of the commissioners, Matthieu, ibid. Chron. Sept. p. 123, &c. Suppl. au Journal d'Henry IV. tom. II. p. 51, &c. vol. 8778, de la Bibliot. du Roi. Le Grain, and several others, who give us a relation of the whole dispute; so consequently no credit is to be given to the manner in which it is related in La Vie du Plessis, liv. ii. p. 269.

been able to destroy that friendship and gratitude which this prelate had always entertained for me, nor that affection and reverence, which I had ever preserved for his merit, his abilities, and even for his quality of being my bishop: the letters we wrote to each other were always in this strain. I was greatly surprised to read in that he wrote to me on account of the book I had sent him, that the errors and falsehoods it contained were so numerous, and followed one another so closely, that the whole book was justly censurable: "Not that I would "accuse monsieur du Plessis of insincerity," added the bishop of Evreux, with equal moderation on his adversary's account as politeness on mine, "but "I am sorry for his misfortune in having given "credit to the confused collections of compilers, "who have greatly deceived him." The remainder of his letter contained only compliments upon my late preferment to the post of master-general of the ordnance, and assurances of the pleasure it would give him "to see me," he said, "who commanded "the cannons of France, obey the canons of the "church."

I never had so entirely good an opinion of du Plessis as the rest of the party had, who were all prejudiced in his favour; and I should have been very unwilling to become security for the correctness of those large volumes, which he sent into the world in so quick a succession, for that on the eucharist had been preceded by a treatise upon the church. To write well, and upon these subjects especially, long reflection is necessary. This I told the bishop of Evreux in my answer, but at the same time I observed to him, that I could not believe du Plessis's book was, as he said, a series of errors. I told du Perron, at the same time, that this would be the subject of a great dispute between them, for du Plessis would not suffer his accusations to pass unanswered; this was all the serious part of my letter, the rest of it was filled with compliment, praises, and an invitation to visit my new dwelling, which do not deserve to be repeated here.*

What I had foreseen happened; except that, I had expected only a private, not a public dispute. I would have interposed the king's authority, to hinder the two champions from proceeding so far, but du Plessis was the most difficult† to be persuaded, and persisted in his resolution to measure his weapons with those of the bishop of Evreux. Every one knows how the dispute was terminated. Du Plessis's defence was weak, and ended in his disgrace. The king, who would honour this challenge with his presence, gave a thousand praises to the wit and learning of monsieur d'Evreux: "What do "you think of your pope?" said Henry to me, during the debate (for du Plessis was with the Protestants what the pope is amongst the Catholics): "I think, sire," replied I, "that he is more a pope "than your majesty imagines, for, at this moment "he gives the cardinal's hat to monsieur d'Evreux. "If our religion had not a better foundation than "his legs, and his arms crossed (for he then held "them in that position), I would quit it this "instant."

It was upon this occasion, that his majesty, in a letter to the duke of Epernon, told him, that the diocese of Evreux had vanquished that of Saumur;

---

* See those letters in the original, tom. II. part. i. p. 52.

† "Sir," said du Plessis to M. de Rosny, "my book is my own "child, which I will defend, and I intreat you will suffer me to do "so: do not you meddle with it, for you have not reared it." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 340.

that this was one of the greatest advantages, which, for a long time, had been obtained for the church of God; and that such a proceeding would draw more Protestants to the true church, than a course of violence for fifty years. This letter, the turn of which was no less singular than the choice Henry made of the duke of Epernon to address it to, made as much noise as the dispute itself, when it became public, which could not fail of happening when it was in such hands. Some said that the king wrote it to destroy the suspicions of his not being a sincere Catholic, which, notwithstanding his conversion prevailed during his whole life, and gave room to the Jesuits to mention him disadvantageously in their letters to Rome: others imagined that this letter had a meaning which was not at first perceived, and maintained, that the king had a view in it to persuade either Spain or the Protestants, that all efforts to induce the council of France to take violent and sanguinary methods with them would be useless.

III. The month of June arrived, without the duke of Savoy's taking any trouble to fulfil his engagement; and his majesty began to see clearly that he should obtain nothing but by force; but, besides the persuasions of his courtiers, who all seemed to have sold their voices to the duke of Savoy, this prince was then retarded by an obstacle far more powerful, his fondness for his new mistress, to whom he had given the title of marchioness of Verneuil. He was no longer able to think of a separation, and (it is with some confusion that I mention it) after I had, by repeated importunities, prevailed upon him to take the rout to Lyons, he deliberated whether he should not carry her with him, to which he was farther incited by the flatterers about him.* She was now with child; and, having the promise of marriage in her possession, the affair became of great consequence to Henry. Providence once more interposed in his favour: Madam de Verneuil was so frightened by the thunder during a storm, that she was delivered of a dead child. The king was informed of this accident at Moulins, whither he had advanced, and from whence he sent many a melancholy look to the place where he had left his mistress; but, restored to himself by his own reflections, he continued his rout to Lyons, where his troops had orders to join him.

I intended to follow, as soon as I had settled all affairs relating to the government, and taken proper measures to secure the necessary supplies for the war, which I did not delay till the moment of execution. I had written to the receivers-general, that according to the king's order they were no longer to pay any bills drawn upon them, except those which were for the support of the frontier garrisons and the payment of the troops, because all others would be immediately discharged at the treasury, to which I ordered all their money to be directly carried. I likewise forbad those who paid rents, to discharge any bills without a new order; I did this, to keep them from paying, as they were accustomed, such notes as had been revoked, or created without money. I raised some militia, which I chose rather to incorporate in the old corps, than to compose new regiments of. I applied myself more particularly to the affairs of the ordnance. I sent orders to the lieutenants of the ordnance of Lyonnois and Dauphiné, and to the commissioners of that of Burgundy, Provence, and Languedoc, to collect all their best pieces, and to make a great number of carriages for cannon, with balls in proportion, and send them all with the powder and other ammunition to Lyons and Grenoble: and fearing, lest my orders should not be punctually executed, I went myself to Lyons, and returned in three days.

---

* She came to meet him at St. André de la Coste. Bassompierre, who was with Henry, says, that the lovers quarrelled at their first meeting, but were soon reconciled: after which, this prince carried his mistress to Grenoble, where he continued with her seven or eight days, and afterwards to Chambery, tom. I. p. 86, &c.

I gave the like orders in all the other provinces, and brought carriers to Paris, whom I obliged to enter into an engagement before a notary, to carry, in fifteen days, three millions three hundred thousand weight to Lyons, without explaining to them what kind of merchandise it was. They were greatly astonished when they found their loading was twenty cannons, six thousand balls, and other things belonging to the ordnance, not very portable. They alleged, that such heavy pieces could not be comprehended in goods of carriage; but having threatened to seize their carts and horses, and they not being willing to lose the expenses they had been already at, resolved to do what was required of them; and I had the satisfaction to see all these stores arrive safely in sixteen days at Lyons; whereas, by the ordinary methods, it could not have been done in less than two or three months, and at an enormous expense.

It was always doubted whether the king would seriously renew the war, till his majesty was seen to take his rout towards the Alps. The chancellor Belliévre, who had persisted in his endeavours to dissuade him from it, finding my advice prevailed, came to me with an intention to make me approve, if possible, of the reasons he had against it. I did not regard him as one of those persons with whom to enter into an explanation would have been useless. His sincerity appeared by the manner in which he spoke to me, and the reflections with which his mind seemed to me to be agitated: the condition France was in, for which a war of any kind whatever could not but be fatal: the king's honour, which was engaged to maintain a work so solid as that of the peace of Vervins: the reproach of the infraction of that peace, to which he exposed himself: the fear of bringing all the duke of Savoy's allies upon him, to oppose whom he had an army sufficiently provided with artillery, indeed, but consisting only of six or seven thousand foot, and twelve or fifteen hundred horse, and (for so Belliévre imagined) destitute of all necessary provisions. This was the sum of the chancellor's objections.

I do not think that, in any passage of these Memoirs, or in the conduct of my whole life, especially since I have been called to the government of public affairs, there is any thing that can lay me under the necessity of justifying myself with regard to too great a propensity for war. Should it appear to any one that, on this occasion, I acted in contradiction to my own maxims, I answer, that, in reality, no maxim, however general it may be, can apply to all cases; and supposing war to be (as I really believe it is) at all times an evil, it is also certain that it is often a necessary and even an indispensable evil, when by it alone those claims can be supported, which it would be baseness to renounce; since it must be likewise confessed, that generosity and mildness, two qualities absolutely necessary in sovereigns, yet when employed against the common rules of prudence, degenerate into weakness, and are looked upon as instances of bad conduct.

To this general reply I added the particular reasons for the present war. I shewed the chancellor, that he suffered himself to be unseasonably alarmed: the king of Spain was the only formidable ally, whom it might be apprehended would join the duke of Savoy; but it was to be considered, that the reigning king of Spain was a young man, without experience or abilities for war, sufficiently employed in reducing his own subjects, and wholly guided by a minister as little inclined to war as himself, by the natural turn of his disposition, and a desire of keeping in his own hands the money which must be consumed by a war; and lastly, that he bore no good-will to the duke of Savoy, and was convinced, as well as all Europe, that the king demanded only a restitution of what belonged to him: that this war would appear a mere difference between the king and the duke of Savoy, or rather an effect of the intoxication of the latter, occasioned by an ill-grounded presumption, and the intrigues carried on in his favour in the council of France: and this presupposed, the success of the war depended upon its being pursued with expedition. I maintained to the chancellor, that, with four thousand men this year, the king would gain greater advantages, than with thirty thousand the next: but I did not neglect to prove to him, that his majesty was not so unprovided as he imagined, at least, that he should not want for two things, which, in the offices I held, it depended upon me to furnish him with, namely, money and artillery. Belliévre was so far from being convinced by my arguments, that he left me with chagrin: the event will shew who had the best reasons on his side.

The duke of Savoy seeing that, contrary to his expectation,* a French army was ready to fall upon him, had recourse to his usual artifices, to prevent, at least, any act of hostility before the winter had begun. He sent deputy after deputy to his majesty at Lyons; sometimes he appeared willing to perform the agreements, sometimes he eluded them by specious reasons, and at other times, he proposed advantageous projects for his majesty, and continued to impose upon this prince so completely, that Henry believing he should be under no necessity to go farther than Lyons, staid there much longer than he ought to have done. While I continued with the king in this city, I guarded him against the subtilties of the duke of Savoy; but, as soon as I left him, to return to Paris, to hasten, as I have said, the preparations for war, he was so effectually deceived by the duke's pretended sincerity, that he wrote to me to suspend my cares, for every thing was settled in an amicable manner.

In effect the duke of Savoy had agreed to all that was demanded of him, but this was a mere verbal agreement, and proposed that hostages should be given on each side; a very proper management to delay the performance of his word, by the time that was necessarily taken up in naming these hostages, and interchanging them. I wrote to the king very freely my opinion of this pretended accommodation, and did not scruple to disobey his orders, by forwarding the ammunition,* and came in person to Montargis, from whence I sent my baggage up the Loire, intending to ride post myself. Here it was that I received a letter from the king, which contained only these few words, "You have guessed "truly: the duke of Savoy has deceived us; come "to me as soon as possible, and neglect nothing that "may be necessary to make him sensible of his "perfidy."

---

* He was encouraged, it is said, by certain idle predictions of astrologers, who gave out that, in the month of August there would be no king in France: a thing that proved very true, says Perefixe, for at that time he was victorious in the heart of Savoy.

I was informed more particularly of all that had passed, by a letter from Villeroi. The king had sent for Roncas, from whom he had received so little satisfaction in the explanation he demanded of him, that resolving to press him in such a manner as to leave him no subterfuge to have recourse to, the Savoyard deputy at length betrayed himself by his equivocations, which threw the king into so great a rage, that he would hear no more, and instantly took his rout towards Chambery; and it was from this place that the abovementioned letter was dated. His majesty imagined that this city would surrender at his approach, and that he would not have the trouble of investing it; but in this he was mistaken.

This interval was employed by the king in soliciting his marriage with the princess Mary of Medicis; and the negociation, which was highly pleasing to the pope, was of service to the king, in hindering his holiness from taking any part in the affairs of Savoy. D'Alincourt, whom his majesty had sent to Rome on this occasion, obtained all that he demanded: the marriage was determined on, and nothing now remained but to send some person to Florence, to solemnize it by proxy. Bellegarde earnestly solicited this honour; but all he could obtain was to be the bearer of the letter which assigned it to the duke of Florence.

---

* Matthieu, in the account which he gives of this expedition into Savoy, bestows, in several places, high encomiums on the duke of Sully, and in a great measure ascribes to him the honours of this campaign. Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 352, 361, 365, &c.

While this ceremony was performing in Florence,* Henry thought it necessary to appear wholly taken up with balls, plays, and entertainments: however, this did not hinder him from laying out no less assiduously the whole plan of the campaign; he ordered Lesdiguieres to take an exact view of the castle of Montmelian: and upon his report, that with twenty pieces of cannon, and twenty thousand discharges, it might be taken, he resolved to attack it. He likewise caused that of Bourg-en-Bresse to be reconnoitred by Vienne and Castenet, who were with me; and it being their opinion that the place might be carried, it was resolved to endeavour to take these two cities by petard, and in the same night; and in proper time besiege the two citadels in form. Marshal Biron, to whom his majesty committed this enterprise, gave the expedition of Montmelian to Crequy, and reserved that of Bourg to himself.

The king had, without knowing it, pitched upon him, amongst all his general officers, who was the least likely to secure the success of the enterprise. Biron was at this time deeply engaged with the duke of Savoy; it is even thought that his treaty might have been at least sketched out. He sent word to Bouvens, the governor of Bourg, to be upon his guard, and informed him of the night and the hour when it was designed to surprise him. All this was afterwards proved. But what is singular enough, this treachery did not hinder the taking of Bourg, and on the same night that it had been resolved to attack it.

---

* See the whole account of it in La Chronologie Septennaire, an. 1600.

Bouvens communicated the advice he had received to the garrison and inhabitants of Bourg, exhorted them to defend themselves bravely, kindled great fires, doubled, nay, trebled the corps-de-guard, and, in a word, took all possible precautions on the night that he expected to be attacked, even to the standing centinel himself. Every one impatiently expected the hour mentioned in the note, which in reality was to be that of the attack. However, it happened that marshal Biron, who was himself at the head of his troops, either to give the governor more time, or to render the execution of the enterprise impossible, or perhaps by mere chance took a road so far about, that instead of midnight, it was break of day when he appeared before Bourg. He would then have persuaded his officers to defer till another time an attempt which, at such an hour, was very improper. But his opinion was so strongly opposed by Saint-Angel, Chambaret, Loustrange, Vienne, and particularly by Castenet, who had undertaken to fix the petard in open day, even though the bastions should be filled, and likewise by Boësse,* to whom his majesty had promised the government of it, that Biron, fearing least he should incur the imputation of cowardice, and believing that the design would miscarry, was obliged to consent to it.

The affair turned out quite otherwise: the garrison and the citizens having been upon the watch till two, three, and even four o'clock, were of opinion that the enterprise was deferred, or that it was merely imaginary; and when day appeared, went to breakfast, and to refresh themselves with sleep, leaving the care of guarding the walls to some centinels who, being oppressed with sleep, acquitted themselves very ill of their charge. Castenet, with three faithful soldiers whom I had given him, advanced as far as the counterscarp, each with a petard in his hand, followed by twelve men well armed, and of tried bravery: the centinel cried, "Who goes there?" Castenet, whom I had instructed, answered, that they were friends of the city, who were come to advertise the governor, that some troops had appeared at the distance of two thousand paces, and were gone back: he added, that he had much more to say to monsieur Bouvens from the duke of Savoy, and desired the soldier to go and inform him of it, that the gate might be opened. The centinel quitting his post to go to the governor's house, Castenet, without loss of time, advanced to the gate and fixed his petard, which carried off the drawbridge, and made a breach, through which, the ditches not being very deep, twelve men, by the help of short ladders, entered immediately, and after them the whole army. All this was executed with such rapidity, that the city was filled in a moment with our men, and Bouvens had only time enough to retire precipitately, with his garrison, into the citadel.

---

* Peter d' Escodaca de Boësse.

The town of Montmelian * was taken in the same manner; and Chambery, by his majesty's orders, was invested: the citizens, full of terror, did not think of defending the town, but fortified themselves

---

* Consult likewise, on all these military expeditions, de Thou, Matthieu, and La Chronologie Septen. an. 1600. in which Sully is mentioned with great honour. See likewise tom. I. des Mem. de Bassompierre.

in the castle, where at first they made a shew of resistance; however, they capitulated the next day, being intimidated by a battery of eight pieces of cannon, the fire of which they durst not stand. By the order his majesty caused to be observed, there was not the least violence committed. The French ladies, who followed their husbands in this expedition, settled at Chambery; and the next day after the reduction of it, my wife gave a ball to the principal ladies of the town, where all appeared as gay as if it had not changed its master.

After this, the king sent me to Lyons, to give orders for the furnishing and conveyance of the ordnance; and commanded me to visit, in this journey, the citadels of Saint-Catherine, Seissel, Pierre-Chatel, l'Ecluse, and other fortresses of Bresse, particularly the castle of Bourg: he ordered me likewise to provide a quantity of gabions, three feet in heighth and nine in width; upon which I answered him, that such gabions were only proper to make an inclosure for sheep newly bought up in the country. The king, on his side, in the mean time, went to possess himself of Conflans, Miolens, Montiers, Saint-Jacome, Saint-John de Morienne, and Saint-Michael: not one of these places held out against the cannon. The taking of Miolens restored liberty to a man who had been detained in the prisons there fifteen years; Feugeres brought him to me on account of the singularity of a prediction that had been made him upon the duration of his captivity, and the person by whom he should be delivered; which was found to be exactly fulfilled.

I left Lyons, to execute the commission his majesty had given me. I reached Villars * by dinner-

---

* In the Upper Bresse.

time, and Bourg in the evening, where I was received and treated with great politeness by marshal Biron. When he found that I came to take a view of the citadel, he used his utmost endeavours to dissuade me from it; representing to me, that I exposed myself to evident danger. He was certainly right: the enterprise was full of hazard; but it was because that this marshal, having failed in his attempt to hinder me from executing my design, had given the enemy (for I cannot think otherwise) such exact information, that wherever I presented myself I found a battery against me. Notwithstanding this, I continued there night and day, till I had finished all my observations.

Biron, who probably had expected that I would pay dear for my curiosity, finding that I had escaped, laid other snares for me: on the day that I was to leave Bourg and return to Lyons, I received advice that a party of the enemy, consisting of two hundred men, had arrived at a castle near the place where I was to lodge that night. I took notice of it to Biron, who now shewed none of that obliging solicitude for my safety which he had discovered before, but treated the information as a jest, which raised my suspicions. I asked him for an escort of soldiers, which he excused himself from granting, telling me, that he would commit this care to his own guards; but he privately ordered them to return, and leave me at Villars, which they did, notwithstanding my entreaties to the contrary, as soon as I alighted at Villars, and my mules were unloaded, The design of this proceeding appeared now but too plain. I ordered my mules to be reloaded, and travelled four leagues farther, nor stopped till I came to Vimy, where I thought myself in safety. My suspicions that Biron had undertaken to deliver me up to the duke of Savoy were changed to a certainty, when I learned that three hours after I had left Villars, the two hundred men came and stormed the house I had been at, and seemed very much concerned that they had missed their object.

A courier from his majesty waited for me at Lyons; his business was, to get a train of artillery to force Conflans, the only one of those little towns the king had attacked that made any resistance, and which surrendered immediately on the approach of the cannon. The king, whom I went to visit at Saint-Pierre d'Albigny, told me, that he was afraid he should not accomplish so easily his designs upon Charbonnieres and the castle of Montmelian; and seemed to make some difficulty about undertaking those sieges at the approach of winter. I assured his majesty, that instead of five months (for so long he imagined the siege of Montmelian would last) it might be ended in so many weeks, provided, during that time, the works were carried on with vigour. The king gave no credit to what I said on this head; and, after I had left him, he told my brother and la Varenne, that my enemies would take advantage of my presumptuous manner of speaking. However, the attention with which I had examined the weak parts of this castle, which had apparently escaped the observation of others, convinced me that I had not advanced any thing lightly.

The next day, the king taking a journey to Grenoble, left the command of the army, in his absence, to me. During this time, I no longer employed myself in examining Montmelian, under the cannon of which we were, but in forming the plan of the out-works, and of the disposition of those batteries with which I expected to carry the fort. I went afterwards to the king at Grenoble, who had passed his time in deliberating with his council upon this enterprise, which he had absolutely forbid me to begin in his absence. I insisted again upon the reasonableness of undertaking it; and again found the same opposition. I know not whether it was through enmity to me, or attachment to the duke of Savoy, that the count of Soissons, the duke d'Epernon, La-Guiche, and many others, appeared so unreasonable: amongst all the counsellors, only messieurs de Lesdiguieres and de Crequy were of my opinion. I laid the plan I had just finished upon the table, and went out, saying, that while they deliberated whether Montmelian should be attacked, I would go and put myself in readiness to take it; and in the mean time would fall upon Charbonnieres, that the example of this fort, for the taking of which I requested only eight days, might teach them what to expect from Montmelian.

Accordingly I laid siege to Charbonnieres, where I suffered incredible fatigues; the first difficulty was to bring the cannon to bear on the place; the only road that led to it was extremely narrow, bordered on one side by the river Arc, of which the bank was all along perpendicularly steep, and on the other by impracticable rocks: they could with difficulty travel a league a day, because they were every moment obliged to unharness the cannon, one of the wheels almost always running over the side of the precipice. We were certain at least of favourable weather; for in this climate it is generally fair during the autumn; however, there now fell such violent rains that the road was all under water, and the eight days, which I had thought sufficient for taking the place, had been almost wholly consumed in bringing up the carriages. This was my excuse in the council, against the malicious remark which the count of

Soissons and others did not fail to make upon the promise I had given. The king, who that moment looked at me attentively, and perceiving that my face was very red, and all overspread with pimples, ran to me, and unbuttoning my clothes, examined my neck and breast, exclaiming, "Ah! my friend, "you are very ill." He sent immediately for Du-Laurens,* who, after examining the pimples, said, that by bleeding and taking a little care of myself they would be removed. I had, indeed, over-heated myself with labour; and, when in a violent perspiration, had been wet quite through my clothes with the rain, without perceiving it. I was bled as soon as I got to my quarters, which were at Semoy: the king had his at Rochette, from whence he sent Thermes the next day to know how I was; and was greatly surprised to hear that his messenger had found me on horseback, visiting my batteries.

Before I erected them, I was willing to take a more exact view of the place, beginning with Aiguebelle, the little town at the foot of the fort. It seemed to me that I was known every where, and that there was a general conspiracy against me; for, as often as I appeared in view, a volley was discharged upon me. The rock upon which Charbonnieres is situated, appearing inaccessible on all sides, and not to be taken by the cannon, I was greatly afflicted: however, examining it more narrowly, I thought that I had found out a part where what seemed on the outside a natural rock, might probably be a place filled up with earth covered with green turf. I repressed the satisfaction this discovery gave me, till the night afforded me an opportunity of being convinced of it. I approached very near the wall, being favoured by the darkness of the night, and was transported with joy, when, upon trying the ground with my pike, I found that it went down as I desired, and that this bastion was such as I had believed it to be. I was no longer in doubt on what side I should batter the fort, and no difficulty now remained, but to find out some place proper for erecting these batteries, for Charbonnieres is, indeed, surrounded with mountains which command the town, but so steep that a man can hardly ascend them on foot. I began again to creep along these mountains, which, in reality, had a terrible appearance, and all seemed wholly inaccessible to the cannon, except one, upon the declivity of which I found a road, where it was not impossible but some pieces of cannon might be heaved up by main strength. Unfortunately the access to this road was by another which passed so near the fort, that they might pelt us from thence with stones. This was another obstacle, which did not, however, discourage me in my attempt. I chose out two hundred French, and as many Swiss, to each of whom I promised a crown, provided they could, by this road, bring up six cannon, which I gave them, and mount them on an eminence that I pointed out to them. I pitched upon a very dark night for this work, recommending to them particularly, to make as little noise as possible; and, to prevent the besieged from observing it, caused horses and carmen to advance in the opposite roads, whose cries and the smacking of their whips, drew all the enemy's fire to that side, but with no effect, for these carts were covered, in their march, by trees, gabions, and even by the walls, while my men that were employed in forcing up the cannon, escaped the notice of the besieged, who were deafened with the noise of their own guns. I appointed la Vallée,* lieutenant of the ordnance in Brittany, and other officers, to superintend and encourage my men in this uncommon method of carriage. It rained so violently, that la Vallée and the rest of the officers left their post to go to supper, and the soldiers their cannon, when they were got about half way. This was what I had expected; and, having taken that road, I met them in their retreat, and gave them a severe reprimand, threatening them that they should have no pay for three months, and brought them all back that instant to their task, which they resumed, and the cannon was again put in motion; I did not quit them till I saw them out of danger, which did not happen without receiving some check: their delay at length occasioned their being discovered, and six were killed and eight wounded.

---

* André Du-Laurens, the king's physician.

I got back to my quarters while it was yet dark, soaked through with the rain, and so disguised with dirt, that I was not to be known, but full of joy that my six pieces of cannon were out of danger, though not yet upon the top of the rocks. I slept an hour, and breakfasted, and returning to my work, met la Vallée, who, not knowing what I had done, began to value himself upon the performance of the night. The reproaches I loaded him with, while I contradicted what he said, ought to have covered him with confusion; but he was the most undaunted liar I ever knew. "What! you have been there then," said he, without the smallest discomposure. "Well, "I sincerely confess I am a fool." "You are so, "indeed," replied I, "and something worse; but "avoid such a behaviour for the future, and repair "your fault." It was not doubted, but the besieged would endeavour to make themselves amends for their being surprised; which did not hinder the cannon, by the mere force of my men's labour, without any assistance from the horses, from being placed upon the rock at nine o'clock, where, during that time, I had made provision of gabions, planks, and every thing that was necessary for constructing platforms. But, when the gabions came to be filled, no earth was to be found within half a league of the place: all that could be got in this stubborn soil was stony, and could not be used for making port-holes and platforms, without running the danger of laming all who were employed in the work. The officers, for want of their usual defence, seeing themselves exposed to the whole fire of the place, came, in great consternation, to acquaint me with the condition they were in. I told them, without any appearance of emotion, that they should begin directly the palisade I had ordered them to erect along the edges of the rocks, making it very high and thick to deprive the enemy of the sight at least of the cannon, which otherwise they would be able to dismount; and this was performed immediately, these mountains being almost all covered with wood. To supply the rest, I ordered the carpenters, and pioneers of the army, to cut down two hundred large beech trees, which were cleaved into billets, some round, to fill up the gabions, others square, to make a secure lodgement for the six pieces of cannon; and the better to conceal their last situation from the enemy, to which the branches of the palisade greatly contributed, I contrived, that there should be on each side several openings filled with baskets of earth; upon which the enemy made a continual fire, without knowing at what part of the palisade the artillery was placed, till the moment when we were prepared to dismount the battery of the fort, and throw down the palisade by which our cannon had been concealed. At two o'clock in the afternoon, this work was completed; and about an hour afterwards his majesty came to visit it, and embracing me, assured me of the satisfaction it gave him. He saw no obstacle that should hinder us from beginning to batter the place. I represented to him, that it was still necessary to delude the besieged till night; he submitted to my opinion, but the count of Soissons, d'Epernon, La-Guiche, and Villeroi, who attended him, making observations that his cannon were pointed against a rock, on which it would be useless to lose more time, Henry came to me and said, that he would have them fire, that instant, some vollies upon the opposite ravelin: I again contested this point with him, and perhaps with rather too much heat; for it gave me great uneasiness to see a work, that had cost me so much labour, likely to be ruined by too much precipitation. My resistance put the king into a passion, and he again, and in a very absolute manner, commanded me to obey him, even adding, that I forgot he was the master. "Yes, sire," replied I immediately, "you are the master, and shall "be obeyed, though at the expense of ruining "every thing." I caused the palisade to be thrown down, and gave orders that they should fire, but I would not be a witness to it, and withdrew in great discontent. As the guns were not aimed, every body took upon him to direct them according to his own mind, but no one hit the right place. After a hundred ineffectual discharges, the king sent la Guesle for me, to complain to me of the faults of my batteries. I replied, that I intreated his majesty would excuse me, for it being now sunset, it was no longer time to undertake any thing. His majesty ordered the firing to cease, and every one withdrawing, I came and lay in the midst of my batteries, which I caused to be completed during the remainder of the night, notwithstanding the rain which fell in great abundance. The besieged, on their side, laboured as hard, and were not without some apprehensions that they should find the place, to which they gave the most attention, defective: I judged so by the fires and torches which I saw lighted up in the fort, and contented myself with interrupting their security, by firing some discharges from time to time.

---

* Michael de la Vallée Piquemouche, governor of Comper.

At the break of day, there arose so thick a fog, that, at six o'clock, the fort could not be seen: this unlucky accident gave me great uneasiness, because all my batteries were ready, and I had boasted over night, that I would take Charbonnieres the next day. I fancied, however, that the agitation of the air, which the discharge of the cannon would occasion, might possibly disperse the fog, and therefore caused some vollies to be fired. Either by chance, or by a natural effect, that which I had jestingly proposed, succeeded almost beyond my hopes. No sooner had the rest of the artillery answered the cannon from the top of the mountain, than the fog wholly disappeared. The besieged had been all night employed in erecting a battery of four pieces of cannon over against my six, which the imprudence committed the day before had discovered to them, and which, at that instant, they endeavoured to dismount. I found that there was no time to be given them, and caused a piece to be pointed directly opposite to their port-holes, which rendered two of their four cannon useless, killed one gunner, and wounded two others: but this did not happen till after their discharge had killed, on our side, six gunners and two pioneers, and at length made our pieces useless, till they were dislodged from thence.

The king, on hearing the noise, ran thither, at nine o'clock, and ordered his dinner to be brought to a place which I had contrived in such a manner, that he might see every thing that passed without danger: this was an enclosure made with the largest trees, laid at their length one upon another, in the form of a rampart. I shewed his majesty the bodies of those who had been just killed, and made him sensible that this was the consequence of the bad counsel that was followed the day before. I did not say this without a design, perceiving that the same persons continued still to find fault with my work, and to prejudice his majesty against me. I did not suffer myself to be at all discomposed with their observations, and told them haughtily, that, not having yet eat any thing, though I had laboured hard all night, I would leave the place free to any of them that were desirous of playing the master-general of the ordnance, but that, at my return, if they did not permit me to order my batteries as I pleased, I would abandon them entirely. My table, as master-general, consisted of forty covers, and was placed under a kind of half arch, formed by nature in the rock, and hung with ivy. The king sent me a large trout pye, which was sent him from Geneva. My dinner was soon over, and I went again to intreat his majesty that he would suffer me to perform the duties of my employment alone, and renewed my promises that I would make him master of Charbonnieres that day. The king replied, that he would be contented if it were taken in three days; upon which la Guesle said, that, if he were in the place, he should know how to hinder it from being taken in a month. "Go there, then," said I to them all, fatigued with their impertinence, "and "if I do not hang you all to-day, let me pass for a "boaster."

The king then withdrew into his enclosure, and delivered me from the importunate presence of his courtiers for three hours, which he passed in waiting for his dinner, at his table, and in surveying the park of artillery. At the end of this time I saw him come back with the count of Soissons, to whom he said, loud enough for me to hear, "This place "will not be taken to-day." The count answered, with great complaisance, that his majesty, who had more knowledge of war than any person whatever, ought to make use of his authority to force me to obey, instead of wasting time in battering a rock, which could not be hurt by the cannon: that instant I had my revenge. The king arrived just at the time that the enemy beat a parley, and the lieutenant of the place came out to treat with me; I intreated his majesty to take no part in the capitulation; and told the lieutenant that he might go back again, for I was resolved that the garrison should surrender at discretion. The lieutenant returned with an affected boldness, saying that there were still two hundred men in the fort who were able to hold it eight days longer. Henry withdrew, leaving Lesdiguieres and Villeroi with me, who persuaded me to accept of the conditions offered by the besieged. Lesdiguieres even carried me towards the fort, to shew me that the enemy were not reduced to extremity. I stopped him when he came within two or three hundred paces of the curtain, telling him, that it would be rashness to expose himself to the mouth of the cannon of the fort; and I withdrew to a rock a hundred paces distant, which served me as a shelter, while these gentlemen very unseasonably rallied me for my caution: but they soon changed their tone when a terrible fire obliged them to follow me.

The lieutenant of the fort returned a second time, but with proposals differing little from the former. I sent him back without hearing him; upon which Villeroi said, that if the city failed of being taken that day, he could not dispense with himself from acquainting the king that it was owing wholly to me. I pretended not to hear him; and, sending the besieged my final determinations in writing, ordered the artillery again to play: the second discharge set fire to the powder of the besieged, and killed twenty or twenty-five of their men, and six or seven women; at the third, the little ravelin fell down entirely, and they could no longer bring any assistance to the breach, because the cannon, sweeping along a low path that led to it, at every fire destroyed some of their best soldiers. This made them resolve to beat a parley once more, which I pretended not to hear, although I saw their drummer carried up in the air to the height of twelve feet, by a cannon ball which entered the ground where he stood, but did him no other hurt. The besieged then held up a pike, with a flag fastened to the top, crying out that they surrendered, and implored us to cease firing: but the artillery continued to play, till the enemy, holding out their hands over the breach to our soldiers, I was afraid some French would be killed amongst them. I then mounted my horse and entered the city in full gallop: it was lawful to treat it as one carried by assault; but that heart must have been wholly impenetrable to compassion, which could not be softened by a sight so truly pitiable as now presented itself: the women, the wounded, and those who were scorched by the fire, came and threw themselves at my feet. I never in any other place beheld the sex so lovely as in this city, nor so finished a beauty as one woman in particular, who came to implore my mercy: instead of executing my threat, to hang all the inhabitants, I gave the same conditions I had offered at first, and caused the garrison to be conducted to a place of security which I had appointed for them.

Notwithstanding this success with Charbonnieres, I still found great opposition in the council to my proposal of attacking the castle of Montmelian. The debate ran very high: "Take care what you do," said his majesty to me, prejudiced by the great number that disapproved of the attempt, "for if we are "obliged to raise the siege, every one will exclaim "against you, and I possibly shall be amongst the "first." They were not sensible at that time what a strong well conducted train of artillery was able to do at a siege: what had happened at Charbonnieres had so confirmed me in my opinion on this head, that I did not scruple to engage that I would carry Montmelian in five weeks, as I had already promised in a former council; I stipulated only for one condition which his majesty could not deny me, because he had accepted it, without its being named, and this was, that he should not be present at the siege, which I foresaw would be very bloody. I produced a plan of the fortress, and of the attack; and every one agreeing that I should make the attempt, I laid siege to the castle of Montmelian.

This castle is situated on a rock almost as hard as that of Charbonnieres, and so high, that it commands the whole country about it; steep and inaccessible on every side except that next the city, where the ascent is less difficult, but on which, to make amends there runs a ditch, cut in the rock itself, and which must have been done with infinite labour with the point of a sharp chissel; besides which, there were three bastions, that could neither be sapped nor undermined, their foundations being of rock itself almost impenetrable, and above a toise and a half deep. The country is interspersed with several mountains, but some are so distant that they appeared to be absolutely out of the reach of cannon, and the rocks that are nearest are so steep, so pointed at the top, and so rugged and bare, that far from its appearing possible to carry up and make use of cannon, it was difficult to believe that a man could climb up. The castle was then provided with thirty pieces of cannon, with ammunition for eight thousand vollies at least, a proportionable garrison, and provision in great abundance.

The first thought that occurred to my mind, and supported it against obstacles in appearance insurmountable, was, that however solid and continued the rock seemed to be, upon which, or rather in which, the bastions were raised, it was possible it might not be all of equal hardness; and that if one part of it only was in the slightest degree weaker than the rest, the artillery I had would secure me the means of opening a passage through it. In order to be convinced, I began to open the trenches before the bastion called Mauvoisin, for otherwise it would have been impossible to have approached near enough to discern whether this whole mass was an entire rock, cut with a chissel; but the rock which we found even with the ground hindered us from carrying on the trenches. I was obliged to have recourse to artifice; and one very dark night caused a hut to be built with clay, and thatched over, very near this bastion, and so low that it could not be thrown down by the cannon; it was shot through and through with the small arms as soon as the day discovered it to the besieged; but it was not overturned, and none of our men were in it. I suffered the enemy to discharge their rage for some days upon this hut, till of themselves they should cease to fire; which at length they did, supposing it had been built there to make them spend their powder in vain. When I found the besieged neglected it, I entered it in the night, taking no other arms with me but a buckler, with which, upon occasion, I could entirely cover my body against the fire. From this hut I carefully examined the whole bastion, at the bottom of which I perceived a light, from whence I concluded it was hollow, and consequently that it was not an entire rock, which could not have been cut into so deep. Without doubt the besieged were then making some repairs there. The day beginning to appear, I perceived likewise that the flank was uncovered; and this was proof that it was not the solid rock which formed either; and that this flank presented itself naked and easy to be pierced with the cannon. I was now satisfied, and had no other care but how to get out safely, which in broad day could not be done without difficulty, the hut not being above a hundred paces distant from the parapet, which was lined with soldiers, and I had above two hundred to go before I could shelter myself: I seized that moment when the guards being relieved, the soldiers began to be careless, and leaving my buckler in the hut, I began to run as fast as I was able; four centinels perceiving me, cried out, and fired upon me at the same time; their musquet-shot whistled about my ears and covered me with gravel and flint stones, but did not wound me; and before the other soldiers were ready, I had gained the nearest lodgement.

I had at first resolved to place a battery of cannon on an eminence on the side of the Isere, where the guns might be carried up more easily by the help of steps cut out; but having observed, on the opposite side of the water, another eminence which faced the citadel, and which had this advantage, that from thence might be seen the road which led to the wells of the castle, and to the magazine, the entrance of the tower, and the guard house: I preferred this last, and considered upon the means to carry up six pieces of cannon. This eminence was perpendicular on all sides but one, and even this side of the ascent was a league about: but this was not the greatest difficulty; to plant them there we must level rocks of such hardness, that most of the officers thought the enterprize ridiculous.

The enemy were not of the same opinion: as soon as they found that we had undertaken to make a lodgement upon the edge of the rock, they pointed six pieces of cannon there likewise, and kept up a continual fire: one day the first volley was discharged when I was giving directions about the works with my truncheon in my hand, and dressed in a green coat laced with gold, and a plume of green and white feathers upon my head: I observed that this shot had passed a good deal above my head, and that which followed it as much below: perceiving that they were going to fire a third time, I said to Lesine, Maignan, and Feugeres, that the next would be between both, and that, without doubt, the besieged having perceived me would take an exact aim. I retired two or three steps behind a shelving part of the rock, from whence I held my pike in one hand, fixed in the place where I had stood myself; one ball threw down the pike, the others killed three pioneers and two gunners, and broke some glasses and bottles that had been brought for a refreshment, and were placed in a hole of the rock. This accident was related to his majesty, as an instance of rashness in me; and he wrote to me immediately, that my person being still more necessary to him for the business of the state than war, he desired that I would not act like a mere soldier of fortune, who had a reputation to raise: and that he would recal me, if I disobeyed this command.

Henry could not resist the desire he had to see the disposition of this siege, and wrote to me a second time, desiring I would dispense with the promise he had given me to the contrary, assuring me, that he would go to those places only that I should appoint, and with no other attendants than the count of Soissons, d'Epernon, Bellegarde, and myself. I entreated him at least to disguise himself in an ordinary cloak: and, above all, to shun, at the expense of going half a league about, a certain field, strewed over with flint stones, opposite to which the besieged continually kept a party of thirty or forty soldiers, armed with musquets; and ten or twelve pieces of cannon were pointed there, because they knew that our men were constantly passing through this field, to go to the new battery raised upon the rock. I did not doubt but that he would have complied with this request; but when he was upon the spot, he could not resolve to use this precaution; and my intreaties being ineffectual, we marched all five in a file. Some musquet-shot we were exposed to at first made two or three of the company look pale; but it was much worse when we entered the field; there was at once so terrible a discharge of the heavy cannon and small-shot, that we were in an instant all covered with earth, and our skin scratched with a shower of the little flint-stones. Henry making the sign of the cross, "It is now," said I, "that I acknowledge you to be a "good Catholic." "Let us go," said he, "this is "a bad place." We doubled our pace, esteeming it a singular piece of good fortune that none of us were killed, or at least lamed. No one thought of returning the same way, but took the road from the mountains, where I caused horses to be brought for the company.

The king was a little ashamed of his unnecessary rashness, which was the cause that, some days afterwards, when I sent him notice that all my batteries were finished, his majesty, who was then returned to the Tarantaise, having an inclination to see them, ordered me to make a truce for some hours with the governor. The king's curiosity being satisfied, I was seized with an inclination to exert the prerogative of a master-general exercising his office in the royal presence; but as this could not be done without a discharge of the artillery, which would have been considered as an infraction of the truce, which was not yet expired, to induce the besieged to break it I ordered some commissaries to send certain ammunitions to the battery upon the rock, which they had an occasion for there. The enemy, who had not lost any part of their fierceness, and probably repented of having granted the truce, cried out that it was violated, and that they were going to fire Accordingly, they fired twelve or fifteen cannon-shot. I had given my men orders, in case this happened, to hold themselves in readiness to answer them immediately by a general discharge. This was the first, and afforded matter for serious reflection to the besieged when they saw their tower battered by fifty cannon: they were the first to demand a continuation of the truce; especially when a second discharge succeeded so rapidly. From that moment they began to alter their opinion, that the citadel was impregnable, and privately sought out ways to procure an honourable composition.

Two women were by chance the first movers* of this accommodation. Madam de Brandis, wife to the governor of Montmelian, and then with him in the castle, amused herself with making little glass toys and pieces of cabinet-work. My wife being then in the town, she sent her a pair of ear-rings and two chains of exquisite workmanship. Madam de Rosny, in return, sent her wine and venison, and desired to know if it was not possible for them to see each other: they obtained permission for it, and passed three afternoons together with such familiarity, that at length they began to consider how Montmelian might be surrendered with honour. Each acquainted her husband with the subject of their conversations, and we were so far from opposing them, that they were authorised to go on, but concealed from one another that they acted by permission. Madam de Brandis had an indisposition that made the country air necessary for her. Her husband thought he could procure this favour through the interposition of my wife; and she made so reasonable a representation to him of the condition to which he would be soon reduced, without being able to obtain honourable terms afterwards, that he consented to treat with me, and sent me a deputation for that purpose: I dispatched notice of it to the king, who proposed it to his council; and it was there resolved, that a month should be granted to the governor, after which, if he was not relieved, the place should be surrendered. I was very sure that it could not hold out so long, and that it was relying too much upon the doubtful sincerity of an enemy to grant such conditions. I gave my opinion freely, but it was to no purpose to oppose a resolution in which envy had as great a share as fear.

---

* The historian who has given us the life of the duke d'Epernon, ascribes to him the honour of taking Montmelian.

The king did not begin to repent of having followed the counsels of marshal Biron and d'Epernon rather than mine, till, a little while before the expiration of the time granted to the besieged, a report was spread, that an army of twenty-five thousand men was coming over the Alps to their assistance. The king acquainted me with the perplexity into which this news threw him: he was determined to meet the enemy and fight them; but he was sensible of the danger he ran, in leaving behind him such a fortress as Montmelian. He asked me if by some means or other there was not a possibility of putting him in possession of it before that time. Difficult as it appeared, it was nevertheless accomplished, and in the following manner.

Ever since the suspension of arms, the count of Brandis suffered all strangers to enter his castle who brought provisions and necessaries which the wounded, and even madam de Brandis herself, had occasion for. As there was only one gate to enter by, the crowd was often so great that some blows passed between them; for which the governor could not chastise them, because there were a great many Frenchmen amongst them; he therefore intreated me to apply a remedy to this inconvenience; and I now believed that I had found the opportunity I sought for. I placed a guard of fifty chosen men at the gate of the castle, commanded by officers, who, being informed of my design, accustomed the guards of the castle to see them enter it, at first three or four only in number, afterwards more, till at length, the garrison not daring any longer either to hinder, or fire upon them, they found themselves almost masters of the castle itself, without giving them any assistance, but, on the contrary, instead of lessening the disorder, these French did all they could to increase it.

Brandis imputed all to the licentiousness of the soldiers, and complained of it to me. I told him, that he might fall upon all those strangers, whom I supposed to be country people. He replied, that he would have done so, but for the great number of my soldiers that were amongst them; and that rather than do them any violence, although without any intention to break the conditions, he chose to confide to me the care of putting an end to the disorder. I seemed to yield to this expedient (which was what I most ardently wished) only to restore order and quiet, and told the governor, that I could easily accomplish it, if I had a guard within equal to that without: he consented to it, and I caused fifty soldiers to enter; but these were not all, thirty had got in before, and a much greater number had slipt in with them; I came thither myself likewise, with all my train: and from that time our party was so strong, that the fort and part of the tower was at our disposal.

Brandis now discovered the fault he had committed, but could repair it no otherwise than by shewing himself still more generous: he came to me and told me, that he consented I should take possession of the tower, and that he gave it up wholly upon the security of my word. I resolved not to abuse his confidence, and faithfully observed all the articles. I supped and lay in the tower that night; and the next day after that in which I had received this commission from the king, I went to tell him, that, without having any thing to fear from Montmelian, he might march to meet his enemies, which he did in good order, and at the head of his army; but the information he had received was found to be false.

The garrison of Montmelian marched out after the month was elapsed, and yielded the place to his majesty, who commanded me to settle Crequy there with his company. The garrison was reinforced, and provided with great plenty of ammunition of all kinds. I would have persuaded the king to dismantle this place, as it must undoubtedly be restored to the duke of Savoy in case of a peace; and to do the same with all the other conquered fortresses: but the advice of the courtiers, who all seemed to be in the pay of the duke, saved Montmelian from a treatment that good policy required.

The mystery of this conduct with regard to Montmelian, as well as many other things, was explained two years afterwards, by the discovery of some letters of marshal Biron in ciphers: he told the duke of Savoy, to whom they were addressed, that he had obtained a month for the garrison of Montmelian, to give him time to raise the siege: that he had nothing to expect from his friends, unless he made an effort to save this place, which could hold out three months longer; and assured him, that the reduction of it would give him great concern. In the letter he wrote to this prince after the castle was taken, he tells him, that his negligence in not succouring it had silenced the French lords in his party, who would have declared against the king, if, by advancing to join them, he had put it in their power to do so with safety. Notwithstanding the caution he observed in not writing their names, they were all so well described that it was not difficult to know them. The silence I keep with regard to these names, is only in favour of some whom the public perhaps has not suspected.

IV. MONTMELIAN had not yet surrendered, when it was reported in the French army that cardinal Aldobrandin, the pope's nephew and legate, was on his way to his majesty, to treat concerning a peace and his marriage. The king having appointed me to go and receive his eminence with all imaginable honours, I advanced to meet him with a body of 3000 foot, and 500 troopers, all spruce fellows. It was not difficult for him to perceive that it was the master-general of the ordnance, who waited for him, by the manner in which he was received at his approach to Montmelian, the truce affording me an opportunity to make use of the artillery of the place as if it had been my own. Upon this occasion I joined them together, to pay him the greater honour: the signal was given by a white flag raised on the battery of the rock: mine began after a great fire of the small-shot, and was answered by that of the castle, in such a manner, that both having time to load again, this double discharge of an hundred and seventy cannons, performed with the utmost regularity, and multiplied by the echoes formed amidst the mountains, had the noblest effect imaginable, though not in the legate's opinion, I believe, who was more frightened than gratified, by an honour so magnificently dreadful, believing all the mountains around him were about to fall down, and he had several times recourse to the sign of the cross.

I carried the cardinal to dinner at Notre Dame de

Miens, and forewarned him of two things relating to the business he mentioned to me; one was, that he should give no credit to any of those persons who would make a boast to him of their interest with his majesty; the other, that if they promised him to get all the places taken from the duke of Savoy restored without being demolished, he should believe them still less, for he might be assured this would never happen. After this caution, I resigned him freely to those sent by his majesty to fetch him, and continued my hostilities, by besieging the citadels of Bourg and fort Saint-Catherine.

The latter was attacked before the other, at the intreaty of the citizens of Geneva, whom the king was glad of an opportunity to oblige. Upon our arrival at this fort, which is situated on a rising ground, in an open plain, of which it seems to be the centre, marshal Biron, who by chance was near me, asked me to go that instant, on horseback as we were, and reconnoitre the place with him. I told him that we were too gaily dressed, and wore too many plumes, to examine it in open day: for the marshal was mounted on a white horse, and wore a large plume of feathers of the same colour. "No, "no," said he "you need not be under any appre-"hension: morbieu! they will not dare to fire "upon us." "Let us go then," replied I, "if you "will, for if it rain upon me it will sprinkle upon "you." Accordingly, we came within two hundred paces of the fort, and observed it a long time, while they only fired twelve or fifteen vollies of small-shot, and I believe in the air, although we were about twenty horse, which surprised me greatly. "Certainly, sir," said I to the marshal, "there is no one within, or they are asleep, or afraid "of us." The king could with difficulty believe this, because being there himself the day before, with six horse only, they fired repeated vollies at his approach; and when I returned the next morning at the break of day, on foot, and with no other company than Erard and Feugeres, I was received with so great a noise of the artillery, that the king sent Montespan thither, believing it was a sally, "Who are these fellows aiming at?" said Montespan to me, finding nobody in sight. "At me, I "believe," replied I, "but I have seen all that I "wanted to see." However, I guessed soon after the cause of the respect they had shewn marshal Biron. I perceived that the flank of the bastions of Saint-Catherine were so bad that great part of them had fallen down, and that the ditch was in no better condition. I assured his majesty, that as soon as the trenches were carried to the extremity of the ditch the place would surrender. In effect, the besieged, who were likewise in want of every thing, demanded to capitulate, if they were not succoured in six days.

After I had opened the trench, I desired leave from the king to make a tour to Geneva: I arrived there the next day, with an hundred horse, and came very seasonably to relieve this city from the terrors which the presence of a great number of Catholics within its walls occasioned. Messieurs de Guise, d'Elbœuf, d'Epernon, de Biron, de la Guiche, and many others, were there, with their several attendants. I assured the citizens, that his majesty had their interest at heart, and that I would not leave them while those gentlemen continued amongst them: but the remembrance of the late persecutions was yet too recent in the minds of the citizens; they could not be satisfied till I had removed the occasion of their fears; which I did that evening by speaking to those gentlemen, who all left Geneva the next day. The city deputed twelve of their chief citizens, with Beza, their minister, at their head, to compliment his majesty, and to endeavour to obtain a request which they kept very secret; this was, the demolition of fort Saint-Catherine, which they were most ardently desirous of. Beza delivered himself like a man of sense, and one who knew how to praise with delicacy; congratulating the Protestants upon the happiness which the reign of so good a prince promised them. Henry thanked the deputies and the city, offering to bestow upon it any of his conquests which should be most suitable for it; and anticipating their request, told them in a low voice, that they should have the pleasure of being masters of the fate of fort Saint-Catherine; and that he gave them his word, in my presence (for he held me by the hand at the same time), that no intreaties whatever should hinder him from razing it. Upon which the deputies withdrew, extremely well pleased.

His majesty, at cardinal Aldobrandin's request, consented that the conferences on the subject of a peace should be held at Lyons, and appointed the cardinal du Perron, the constable, the chancellor, Villeroi, and Jeannin, to treat with the legate: they had yet come to no agreement, when the future queen arrived in that city.* As soon as the king was informed of it he quitted his quarters, and set out in very rainy weather, riding post, with great part of the lords of his court. It was twelve o'clock at night when we got to the bridge of Lyons, where he waited a full hour, wet through with the rain, and almost perishing with cold, before they would open the gate; for his majesty would not suffer himself to be named, that he might have the pleasure of surprising the queen; they had not yet seen each other. The marriage ceremony was performed

---

* This princess left Florence on the 17th of October, having embarked at Leghorn, and, with an escort of seventeen galleys, landed at Toulon, from whence she came by the way of Marseilles and Avignon to Lyons, where the king arrived post on the 9th of November. I take the following account from the most authentic Memoirs of those times: the queen happened to be at supper when the king alighted; having a desire to see her at table without being

discovered, he went in as far as the drawing room, which was very much crowded; but he was known the moment he appeared by those nearest the door, who opened to make way for him: upon which, his majesty went away directly, without going farther. The queen, in the mean time, was well aware of all this, but still gave no other signs than by putting the dishes away as often as she was served with any thing, and eat so little, that she seemed to have sat down rather for form's sake than to sup. After the table was removed, she returned immediately to her chamber. The king, who waited only for this, came to her chamber door, and ordering M. le Grand to go before; he knocked so loud, that the queen thought it must be the king: upon this she stept forward at the very instant that M. le Grand entered the room, who was followed by his majesty, at whose feet she immediately threw herself. The king raised her, embraced her with great tenderness, and all that was polite, passionate, and respectful, passed on both sides. After the first compliments were over, the king took her hand, and led her to the fire-place, where he continued talking with her above half an hour; he afterwards went to supper, but eat very sparingly. In the mean time, he bid madam de Nemours tell the queen, that he had not provided himself with a bed, expecting she would give him part of hers, which from that time was to be in common between them. Madam de Nemours carrying this message to the queen, she returned for answer, That she had come thither only to obey his majesty, as the humblest of his servants. Upon this, the king undressed, and went directly to the queen's chamber, who by this time was in bed. Chronologie Septennaire, an. 1600, where also may be seen the particulars of the queen's journey, and her reception into the towns of France, &c. De Thou, liv. 125. Matthieu, tom. II. p. 378.

without any pomp. We attended the king at supper, who afterwards dismissed us to refresh ourselves likewise; and he retired to the queen's apartment.

His majesty's arrival only increased the warmth with which they contested the articles of the peace: the plenipotentiaries were almost all in the duke of Savoy's interest, and glad of an opportunity to make their court to the legate; which was the cause that Henry thought it necessary to make them give an account of their negociation, and severely blamed the commissioners for having exceeded the power that was given them. Bellievre and Villeroi had promised the legate, that none of the fortresses which had been taken should be demolished, but especially Saint-Catherine, for which the legate particularly solicited, as being the best, and even the only bulwark the duke of Savoy had against the republic of Geneva. Henry made them sensible, that their precipitation in subscribing to an article of this importance without consulting him, had given him some suspicion of them; and added, that in a few days he would acquaint them with his intentions upon that head; then sending for me, he told me, that the shortest way to prevent the solicitation which he expected from the legate, would be to blow up the five bastions of the fort, and to send word to the citizens of Geneva to come and complete the demolition of it. No order was ever more expeditiously nor more effectually executed. The Genevois, in one night, laid this citadel even with the ground, and carried away all the materials so carefully, that the next day it could with difficulty have been believed that there ever had been a fort on the spot; and at first the report ran, that it was destroyed by lightning. When the truth was known, the legate expressed great resentment at it, and did not scruple to confess, in the heat of his passion, that I was the only person who had not deceived him with flattering hopes on this head, and that he had not sufficiently attended to my admonitions; but his having, upon the faith of the commissioners, given very different expectations to the pope, was what he was chiefly concerned at. The negociation was entirely broke off for three or four days; and when it was afterwards resumed, it was with so much animosity on his eminence's part, that he rejected all the propositions which were made him: these were, That the duke of Savoy should yield to the king the course of the river Rhone and its borders: that he should not erect any fort within a league of it, to favour the passage of the Spaniards: that he should leave to the republic of Geneva the enjoyment of certain villages, likewise specified: that Béche-Dauphin* should be demolished, Chateau-Dauphin restored: and lastly, that the duke should pay a hundred and fifty thousand crowns for the expenses of the war.

The king looking upon this affair as wholly impracticable, through the obstinacy of the legate, resolved to carry on the war more vigorously than before, and communicated his design to me, which was, to go in search of the duke of Savoy at the head of his army; while I, with the artillery, battered the citadel of Bourg. Each of us had particular obstacles to this double project, besides the want of money, which was common to both. I found the enterprise on Bourg very difficult to be executed, the season being now so far advanced: the difference between this castle and that of Montmelian, with which, I think, it may be compared, is, that for those who have only ten or twelve pieces of cannon, Montmelian is equivalent to ten such places as Bourg, because the reduction of Montmelian depends upon having artillery sufficient to batter the outworks; but, for a train of sixty cannon, the citadel of Montmelian is not more difficult to carry than that of Bourg; because the latter being more regular than the other, it can only be attacked methodically, and by slow degrees. Had the advice I gave, to attack this fort immediately after the surrender of Montmelian, been followed, it would have been now in the king's possession.

---

* Frontier of Dauphiné.

With regard to the king, his perplexity was occasioned by his knowing in what manner the greatest part of his general officers conspired with Spain and the duke of Savoy against him: he had great reason to be apprehensive of engaging himself in the enemy's country, if they were with him: Lesdiguieres was the only one on whom he could depend; he had lately given an instance of his fidelity, in sending notice by Calignon, that the duke of Bouillon made use of a man named Ondevous to carry on his correspondence with the great lords of the kingdom. It is certain, that if Calignon had been more diligent to acquit himself of his commission, Ondevous would not have had time to escape as he did, and his detention might have laid open all the schemes of the seditious; but there is no appearance that this happened through the fault of Lesdiguieres. I advised the king to rely entirely upon him, and to bind him still closer to his service, by making him a marshal of France, and governor of Piedmont. As for the rest, it was easy to prevent the consequences of their ill intentions, by giving them employments at a distance from the body of the army. But the affair which appeared most pressing to us both being that of procuring a supply of money, it was resolved that I should set out for Paris in four days: and that I might be enabled to pass six entire weeks there, I employed these four days in making all the necessary preparations for the attack of Bourg, in paying the soldiers out of what little money remained, and in providing for the ordinary as well as extraordinary expenses of the king's household. The very next day I sent away my wife and my equipages before me, with directions to wait for me at Rouanne, from whence I purposed, as soon as I should arrive there, to send them down the Loire as far as Orleans: they waited for me three or four days longer, because my measures were broken by the alterations that happened in the affair of the peace.

When I went to take leave of the king, he advised me to visit the legate also before I set out, he having always expressed great esteem for me. I went accordingly, booted, my post-horses waiting for me on the other side of the river, opposite to his lodgings. He asked me where I was going in that dress? "To Italy," replied I; "and I shall go "with good company to kiss the pope's foot." How! "to Italy?" said he, in great amazement: "no, "that must not be, sir; I beg you will assist me to "renew this peace." I seemed to consent, in respect only to his mediation, the king having laid aside all thoughts of it. I repeated, in a few words, all the principal articles that had been already proposed, and afterwards asked him if he would give credit to what I was going to say to him? Having assured me he would, I told him, that he might be absolutely certain, that of these articles, his majesty would abate none of his demands with regard to the borders of the Rhone, the villages in the neighbourhood of Geneva, Chateau-Dauphin, and Béche-Dauphin; because I was well acquainted with the king's intentions in all these respects. He desired to know my reasons: which I excused myself from telling him, on account of the short time I had to stay. After walking, thoughtfully, several times backwards and forwards in his chamber, he asked me if I would assure him, with the same protestations of sincerity, that, provided he agreed to all these points, there should be no mention made of the other. I told him, that I believed I might promise this. Upon which, he entreated me to go and acquaint the king with what he had said. Henry was glad to see me come back: and I returned a moment afterwards to the legate with full powers from his majesty; and we concluded that * instant a treaty which had been protracted so long a time, the conditions of which were as follows:

The duke of Savoy, in exchange for the marquisate of Saluces, which the king of France gave up, was to make a cession to his majesty of the fortresses of Cental, Monts, and Roquesparviere, the whole of Bresse, the borders and country of the Rhone on both sides as far as Lyons, except the bridge of Grezin, and some passages necessary for his highness to enter Franche-Comté; but he was not by this cession to acquire a right to raise any tribute in these places, or to build any fort there, or to ferry troops over, but by the king's permission, and on condition that, for this privilege of passing the bridge of Grezin, the duke should pay France one hundred thousand crowns. That he should likewise resign to his majesty the citadel of Bourg, the

---

‡ M. de Thou, Matthieu, and La Chron. Sept. agree with this account, ib. an. 1601. See also the treaty in the Mem. de Nevers, tom. II. p. 775, &c.

bailiwic of Getx, Chateau-Dauphin and its dependencies, with all that could be comprehended in the province of Dauphiné on this side the Alps: That he should likewise renounce the property of Aus, Chousy, Valley, Pont d'Arley, Seissel, Chana, and Pierre-Châtel, to the borders of Geneva: That the fortifications of Béche-Dauphin should be razed: That the king should, on his side, restore all the other forts he had taken, which are not specified here, withdrawing the artillery and ammunition that were then placed in them. The other articles related to criminals, and prisoners of war that had fled on either side, church benefices, exchange of estates between private persons, &c. It was provided for the duke of Nemours, part of whose estate lay in this country, that he should not be disturbed in the possession of it, neither for the part which he held of the king, nor for that which he held of his highness. The other clauses common to all treaties I shall not mention.

Notwithstanding this treaty was signed by me in the name of the king, by the legate in that of the pope, and by the duke of Savoy's agents, yet the duke, influenced by the count of Fuentes, put off so long the entire conclusion of it, by his complaints and delays, that the king thought it necessary not to lay down his arms: he took post to Paris,* where he waited for the duke's determinations.

---

* "He departed," says Bassompierre, "one night post from "Lyons in order to return to Paris; and embarking at Rouanne, "landed at Briare; from whence he came to lie at Fontainebleau, "and next day dined at Villeneuve; and crossing the Seine below "the Tuilleries, came in the evening to Verneuil (afterwards Senlis.) "We continued three days at Verneuil, and then came to Paris.— "At length the queen arrived at Nemours; and the king, having "rode post with sixty fresh horses, came and carried her to Fon-"tainebleau; after staying there five or six days, she arrived at

In case there should be a necessity for his returning into Savoy, he had certain measures to take for the affairs within his kingdom, and in Paris especially, at a time when every place was filled with malecontents. He left the constable and Lesdiguieres, with some good troops upon that frontier till his return; and Villeroi and two or three other commissioners at Lyons, to conclude the business of the peace.

But his majesty found no occasion to return into these provinces. The duke of Savoy, after having long amused himself with expectations from the disaffected French lords, gave place to more prudent thoughts; and reflecting on what he had already lost by his obstinacy, he was very happy to accept the treaty in the form already mentioned; accordingly the last formalities were added, and the peace was published at Paris and Turin with the usual ceremonies: however, the articles were not fulfilled without many difficulties being raised by the duke of Savoy, which detained Villeroi at Lyons part of the following year: it was not till then that every thing was entirely agreed to; and Spain, who had taken great interest in the affair, even advised the duke of Savoy to comply with the articles of the treaty. On all these occasions Henry paid great deference to the pope. He granted all the delays which the duke of Savoy, engaged the legate, by count Octavio Taffone, to demand, which was contrary to Villeroi's advice: but his majesty having in reality obtained all that he could demand, he thought he ought not to observe too rigorously the manner it was yielded to him, nor hazard, for such a trifle, a renewal of the war. This produced as many ad-

---

"Paris, and was accommodated with apartments at the house of "Gondy." Mem. de Bassompierre. tom. I. p. 89, 90.

vantages to the king as any war concluded in a single campaign could possibly do. His majesty declared, that Bresse should not be comprehended in the district of Lyons, but that it should be reunited to Burgundy, and be under the jurisdiction of the court of *aides* of Paris.

The queen did not set out immediately after for Paris. She had brought with her Don John, her uncle, a bastard of the family of Medicis, Virgilius Ursinus, her cousin, who being brought up while young, with her, had conceived hopes above his condition. Many more Italians of both sexes were in her train; amongst others, a young man named Conchini, and a girl called Leonora Galigai, who afterwards played a great part in France. I went to Paris eight days before the queen, to make preparations for the ceremony of her entry,* which was performed with great magnificence. The next day, the king brought the queen and the whole court to the Arsenal to dine with me; her majesty was attended by all her Italian ladies, who being pleased with the wine of Arbois, drank more of it than was necessary. I had some excellent white wine that was as clear as rock water: I ordered some decanters to be filled with it, and when the ladies asked for water to temper the Burgundy, they were presented with this liquor: the king suspected, by their gaiety, that I had played them a trick. This winter was wholly taken up with parties of pleasure, on account of the king's marriage.

---

* It does not appear that this princess was complimented with the ceremony of a public entry into Paris. The citizens, says the Chronologie Septennaire, would have prepared a very magnificent one for her, and addressed the king for that purpose, but his majesty chose rather that the expense of the entry should be laid out on other things that were more necessary. It afterwards adds: Upon her arrival at the postern-gate of the suburb St. Marcel, the marquis de Rosny caused all the cannon of the Arsenal to be fired three times. She was carried in a litter along the moats of the city, and that day lodged at the suburb St. Germain, at Gondy's house, and the next at Zamet's, and after that at the Louvre. Ibid.

In Flanders, this year, the war broke out with great violence; prince Maurice of Orange gained a battle in the month of May against the archduke Albert,* in which the admiral of Castile, the man on whom he chiefly depended, was taken prisoner. He afterwards laid siege to Nieuport,† but was obliged to raise it. All I shall say of the war between the Emperor and the Grand Signior in Hungary, is, that the duke of Mercœur was made lieutenant-general there by his imperial majesty.‡ I suppress a detail of the grandeur and magnificence of the secular jubilee at Rome,§ and shall conclude the memoirs of this year with an incident that afforded matter for much serious reflection upon duels: Breauté* having killed his adversary in a very uncommon combat, was afterwards assassinated himself.

---

* This was the celebrated battle of Nieuport, fought in July, 1600: the victory was gained chiefly through the bravery of the English forces, and the skill of their commander, Sir Francis Vere. About nine thousand of the enemy were slain, and, besides the admiral mentioned above, a great many other persons of distinction were taken, and several wounded, of which number was the archduke himself. The English general was also wounded in the leg and thigh, and his horse shot under him early in the action. See Vere's Commentaries; Cambden, and Bentivoglio, pt. III. b. vi. Edit.

† This is not quite correct, Prince Maurice had laid siege to Nieuport, previous to the battle, after which he again resumed the siege; but was obliged to raise it, and return to Holland. See as above. Edit.

‡ Consult the general and particular accounts of the military expeditions between the armies of the emperor and the Grand Signior which are mentioned here.

§ It was said, that 300,000 French, men and women, went to Rome, to obtain the indulgence of the jubilee, for the ceremonies of which, see La Septennaire, an. 1600, and other Memoirs of that time.

---

* Charles de Breauté, a French gentleman of Caux, captain of a troop of horse in the service of the States; his antagonist was a Flemish soldier, lieutenant of a company under the governor of Boisleduc, with whom he fought a singular kind of combat, of twenty French against the same number of Flemings; he had the advantage in the first encounter, in which he killed his antagonist, but was made prisoner in the second, and put to death by order of the governor of Boisleduc. He was one, says the author of the Chronologie Septennaire, that eagerly sought after occasions of duelling, for which reason he had been obliged to quit the court of France.

BOOK XII.

1601.

I. Affairs of the finances; of money, of commerce, &c. Prohibition against carrying gold or silver coin out of the kingdom. Chamber of justice established, but to little purpose. The author's reflections upon luxury and corruption of manners. The officers of the robe and finances suppressed. Journey of Henry IV. to Orleans.—II. Affairs of the United Provinces. Henry goes to Calais. The French ambassador insulted at Madrid. Embassies from the Grand Seignior and the Venetians. The queen of England comes to Dover; letters betwixt her and Henry; Rosny goes to Dover; conversations between Elizabeth and him, in which they lay the foundation of the great design against the house of Austria: the great wisdom of Elizabeth. Death of young Châtillon-Coligny. Birth of Lewis XIII. Henry makes La-Riviere calculate his nativity.—III. The affair of the isles concluded with the grand duke of Tuscany. The count of Bethune named ambassador to Rome through Rosny's influence, notwithstanding the endeavours of Villeroi and Sillery to the contrary. Opposition made by these ministers to the opinions and policy of Rosny.—IV. Particulars of the conspiracy of marshal Biron: Rosny endeavours to recal him to his duty: Henry sends him ambassador to London; to Switzerland: he resumes his intrigues at his return; La-Fin's depositions. An account of the pretended Don Sebastian; and other foreign affairs.

I. In the foregoing book I finished the last military narration that will be found in these Memoirs, in which at least France was concerned. The life of Henry the Great, which had hitherto been wholly passed amidst the tumult of arms, will in the sequel exhibit only the actions of a pacific king, and the father of a family. The manner in which the campaign in Savoy had been conducted and terminated leaving no room to fear that the peace would be again infringed by those ancient enemies of the monarchy, or that it would not subsist as long as his majesty pleased, I resumed, by his orders, and under his inspection, those schemes with regard to the finances which the war had suspended, and were now to meet with no more interruption. After the representation I have already given of the state of affairs within the kingdom, it would be injurious to consider the life which the prince and myself now embraced as idle and inactive: if it is less noisy and tumultuous, it is probably more laborious. Behold me therefore again shut up in my closet, where I applied myself with the utmost attention to the examination of all the abuses which still remained to be rooted out of the chamber of accounts;* the offices of the finances, the crown lands, the aides, the subsidies, the equivalents, the five large farms, the tenths, and all the others. I laboured at once for the present and the future, by taking such measures, that the method I established in the direction of every part of the finances might not be afterwards subject to any alterations. I considered of means to enrich the king without impoverishing his subjects, to pay his debts, to repair his palaces, to complete the art of fortifying his cities, still more than that of attacking and defending them, and to make provision of arms and ammunition. I extended my cares to find out a method how to repair and renew the public works, such as roads, bridges, keys of rivers, and other buildings, which reflect no less honour upon the sovereign than the splendour of his own palaces, and are of general utility: for this purpose I began by enquiring into the application that had been made of the money granted for those uses to the cities and corporations, or rather into the frauds that had been practised in the management of these funds.

---

* As to these reformations, consult also Matthieu, tom. II, liv. lii. p. 444.

The scheme of drawing up for every department of the finances, general registers, which should lay down their nature uniformly and clearly, seemed always so happy a thought, and so proper to bring them to the utmost exactness, that wherever this method was practicable I made use of it. On the first day of the year 1601, when I presented to the king the gold and silver medals, as usual, I delivered to him at the same time five of these general registers, each of which related to one or other of my employments, bound up neatly in one volume. In the first, which was of the greatest importance, because I there gave an account of whatever concerned myself as superintendant, was set down on one side, all the money that was raised in France by the king from whatever tax; on the other, all that was to be deducted for the charge of collection, and consequently all that was to be brought clear into his majesty's coffers. I cannot persuade myself that this method was never thought of by any one since the finances were subject to some regulation; interest alone could have prevented the execution of it. However that may be, I will always maintain, that without this guide there is no proceeding without mistakes or roguery.

The second of these registers was drawn up merely for the use of the keeper of the royal treasury; here was set down, whence and upon what account he received all the king's money that passed through his hands during the year he was in office, and how much he was at liberty to disburse out of the whole sum, and for what purposes. The third was compiled for the use of the master-general of the ordnance, and contained an exact account of money received and expended; with a true inventory of all that related to the artillery, the number and description of cannon, and of other arms, the quantity of instruments of war, and of provisions, laid up in different forts, or magazines; the state of the arsenals and fortified places, and other observations of the same kind. The fourth related to my employment of chief surveyor of the roads, and gave an account of all the money disbursed or to be disbursed for the repair of every thing in this department, whether it was to be done at the expense of the king or of the provinces. And, lastly, the fifth contained a catalogue of all the towns and castles, particularly those on the frontiers, which then required any money to be laid out upon them; with a kind of rough draught of the works necessary at each place, formed with due regard to their natural situation and present condition.

The king, on my representation, reformed many abuses with respect to money, which had caused a decay of commerce, of which money is the chief instrument; the first was the practice which was then allowed, of putting money to interest at eight, or even at ten *per cent.*[*] a practice equally mischievous for the nobility and the people; for the nobility, because they, being forbidden to engage in trade, have no other riches but the produce of their estates, the value of which was reduced by high interest; for the people, because, by putting out money to interest, they made as great a profit by sitting still as by labour, and thereby kept immense sums useless to the public, which, without that method of growing rich, they would have improved by some means advantageous to the commonwealth. The interest of eight *per cent.* was abolished, and six *per cent.* allowed in its stead.

---

[*] It is thus that a prince, in our times, remarkable for his abilities and superior skill in politics, has judged: being firmly persuaded, that the state would receive great advantages in every respect from a regulation which would oblige monied men to betake themselves to commerce and agriculture, which are infinitely preferable to the bare and dead produce of rents.

The coin of different countries was till this time current in France, and passed in commerce equally with that of our own sovereign. A prohibition was issued, by which all money was put down but the coin of France,* that of Spain only excepted, which would have been too much missed in commerce had it been at once forbidden. But it was more necessary to rid ourselves of the merchandize of our neighbours than of their money, for the whole kingdom was filled with their manufactures; and it is incredible how much mischief was done by foreign stuffs, particularly those of gold and silver. The importation of these, and of all others, was forbidden under severe penalties: and because France had no means of supplying herself with them out of her own stock, we had recourse to the true remedy, which is, to do without them; the use of all stuffs wrought with gold or silver being forbidden by the king.*

---

* It is true, that the gold and silver coin of other countries ought not to pass current and be confounded with that of the prince in internal commerce, and in payments made between individuals; but is it not evident, that the more such coin abounds among our own money, the more flourishing will our commerce be? The historian Matthieu observes, tom. II. l. iii. p. 446. that this prohibition made the commerce in France decrease almost entirely; and the duke of Sully himself confesses, a little lower, that he was obliged to have recourse to other means to retrieve it. We will examine this question with him, when he comes to treat of it, in the following book. As to the prohibition of using gold and silver in clothes and household furniture, we shall also have occasion, in the sequel, to give our opinion on the principles he establishes with regard to luxury.

All these declarations tended to introduce a final one, by which it was forbidden to carry any kind of money out of the kingdom, under the penalty of a confiscation of all that should be intercepted in the carriage, and likewise of all the property of the offenders, as well those who favoured as those who were guilty of the infringement of this law. The king gave a public proof how much he had this affair at heart, by the oath he made, not to grant any pardon for this sort of misdemeanors; and even to hold all those suspected who should dare to solicit him to the contrary: yet all this could only oblige those persons who carried on such practices to conceal them more carefully. I was of opinion, that one example would be more efficacious in correcting this obstinate evil than all the threats that had been published against it. I was not ignorant that a great many very considerable persons, and even amongst the courtiers themselves, made a fund out of this pernicious traffic, either by suffering this money to pass under their names, or by selling, at a high price, the authority which enabled them to correspond with foreigners, and secured the privileges of passage. I thought it most prudent to apply myself to those who were employed by them for these correspondences, and promised them, that, as a recompense for their discovery, they should have the fourth part of the sums which should be seized through their informations; for the king having made over these confiscations to me, I had a right to dispose of them. By these means I was well served.

---

* He shewed, by his example, how to retrench the superfluity of dress, for he commonly went clad in a coat of gray cloth, with only a doublet of satin, or taffety, without any indented edgings, lace, or embroidery: he commended such as dressed in that plain fashion, and ridiculed those, who carried, as he said, their windmills and their old woods on their backs. Peref. part iii.

A month had scarcely elapsed, when I received notice from an inconsiderable person, (the authors not being willing to make themselves known,) that there were two hundred thousand crowns in gold collecting for exportation, which were to be sent at two different times, and that the first carriage would be much less than the second. After having taken all the necessary precautions, this sum appearing rather too considerable for me, I thought myself obliged to mention it to the king, who made this modification in the right he had given me, that if the sum did not exceed ten thousand crowns, I might appropriate it to myself, but that the overplus should be his, "Which will come," said he, "very "seasonably, as I have had some loss at play that I "durst not tell you of, nor make up with my own "money." I was not so mercenary as to wait for the seizure of the second carriage. I ordered the first to be watched, and with such vigilance, that it was stopped half a league beyond the territories of France; it could not be done in the kingdom, though but a quarter of a league from the frontier, without furnishing the offenders with a pretext for getting it released. There was found in pistoles, and double pistoles, and crowns of the sun, to the amount of forty-eight thousand crowns, which were concealed in some bales of common goods for exportation. The king's resolution on this article was so well known, that the conductors named no person as proprietor of it; and notwithstanding all the noise this seizure made at court, it was disavowed by every one; and the sum was divided by his majesty, in the following manner: seventy-two thousand livres he reserved for himself, twenty-five thousand he ordered should be given to the informer, and the remaining forty-seven thousand he left to me; promising me, that however large any future capture might be, he would take no part of it from me. But after this, no more attempts were made to carry money out of the kingdom; this example had given a general dislike to so ruinous a traffic.

Those who composed a chamber of justice* which was erected against the contractors, treasurers, receivers, and others who had been guilty of misdemeanors in their offices, were likely, in appearance, to produce far more terrible effects. It was my advice, that those offenders should not only be obliged to refund, but that those who were convicted of embezzling the public treasure should be corporally punished. Money, however, the possession of which covers all the crimes it is the cause of, shielded this from the just rigour of the law.† I would, were it possible, transfuse into the breasts of my countrymen some portion of that indignation which fills mine, against so pernicious an abuse, and all that contempt which I feel for those who owe their elevation to it. If we consider as a slight matter, the despicable light we appear in to our neighbours by this shameful custom (for none strikes more directly at the honour of the nation), we cannot conceal from ourselves the evils it has given rise to; nothing has contributed more towards perverting our ideas of probity, candour, and disinterestedness, or turning those virtues into ridicule; nothing has more strengthened that fatal propensity to luxury, which is natural to all men, but which is become with us a second nature, by that peculiarity of temper which makes us fasten eagerly upon every thing that can gratify our passions; and nothing in particular has so greatly degraded the French nobility, as the rapid and dazzling fortunes of contractors and other men of business, by the opinion which they have circulated every where, and which is indeed but too well grounded, that in France this is almost the only method of arriving at the highest honours, and the first employments of the state, and that then every thing is forgot, and every thing is allowable.

---

* Otherwise called the royal chamber: it consisted of a president of the parliament of Paris, two counsellors, two masters of request, a president and four counsellors of the chamber of accounts, a president and three counsellors of the court of aids, and one of the general advocates of the parliament, &c. Commissioners were sent into the provinces, to give information of those who had been guilty of any malversations.

† The duke of Sully seems to me to reason justly, when, in supposing the utility of the chambers of justice, he requires, that they should not confine their proceedings to pecuniary mulcts only, but join to these corporal punishments. And he seems to me to have still greater reason, when, in the sequel, he advises the suppression of this method as absolutely useless, and the entire abolition in France, of the custom of compositions in farming the finances: this was likewise the opinion of cardinal Richelieu. Testament Polit. part. I. ch. iv. § 5.

To go to the source, military virtue is almost the only quality by which true nobility can be obtained, preserved, or dignified in France: and in this practice there will be found no prejudice or empty opinion, if it be considered, that precedence must naturally be granted to that rank, by which all other classes of the community are preserved and supported in that security without which there can be no property: but, through an effect of the simplicity which still proves the antiquity and the purity of its first institution, this state of life is not the way to great fortune; by bravery nothing but honours could be got, because in those times honour was the only reward of glorious actions. At this day, when the notions of mankind are changed, and when every thing is rated by the money which it brings, this generous body of nobility is brought in comparison with the managers of the revenue, the officers of justice, and the drudges of business. But this comparison terminates in a universal agreement, to pay to these gatherers of money that respect which must always be shewn to those who are possessed of power, and are, in fact, our superiors, an advantage which the former have lost.* And, indeed, how should it be otherwise, when we see the nobility of the same mind, with regard to this point as the meanest of the people, and making no scruple to mingle the most illustrious blood in a shameful alliance with a dirty pedlar, who knows nothing but barter, his shop, his counter, or knavery? This abuse is necessarily productive of two others, confusion of ranks, and degeneracy of families, which last is better proved by experience than argument. We need only take a view of that great number of mongrel gentry with which the court and city is filled, and we shall find them wholly destitute of the plain and manly virtue of their ancestors: with no depth of thought, no solidity of judgment, but rash, inconsiderate, passionately fond of play, naturally inclined to dissoluteness, solicitous about dress, with a vitiated taste in every kind of luxury, so that one would imagine they thought to exceed even the women in the effeminacy of their manners: yet these people engage in the army; but what can be expected from them with such dispositions, to which is often added a secret contempt for a profession they only embrace through constraint? This subversion of all order is indeed to be lamented, but is inevitable, while that profession, which has only glory for its object, is not exalted to the highest rank, and dignified with the chiefest honours, which, for that purpose, ought to be taken from the upstarts of fortune; and since the infamy which we should find these creatures of chance stained with, if we took pains to examine them, is not sufficient to excite our contempt, it is necessary they should be branded with public marks of disgrace, to show the rank they ought to hold.

---

* Cardinal Richelieu complains of this abuse, and proposes a remedy for it, according to the duke of Sully's scheme. "Gentlemen," says he, "cannot be promoted to places of trust and dignity, but at "the expense of their ruin; for at present all sorts of people are "admitted to them through the infamous traffic carried on by means "of money. For the future, all persons should be excluded from "those posts, but such as have the good fortune to be of noble "birth." This minister concludes, in another place, after M. de Sully, "That the means of continuing the nobility in that purity "of manners which they derive from their ancestors (these are his "words) is to retrench that luxury and intolerable expense which "have been gradually introduced." Part I. ch. iii. § 1.

The king was convinced of the justness of this reasoning: however, in this chamber of justice, the same thing happened that generally does: the petty rogues paid for all the rest; the principal delinquents found their security in that very metal for which they were prosecuted; they made use of a small part of it in presents, which saved the other. This moderation would not have prevailed with the king, had it been employed directly; but they found access to the ladies of the court, and even to the queen herself; they gained the constable, Bouillon, Bellegarde, Roquelaure, Souvré, Frontenac, and some others, who, though not of this high class, knew as well how to work upon the king's inclinations; such were Zamet, la Varenne, Gondy, Boneuil, Conchini, and many more of that sort. The complaisance of Henry for those whom he suffered to live in some degree of familiarity with him, and especially for ladies, destroyed all his wise resolutions, so that the storm burst only upon those who had reason to reproach themselves with not having yet stolen enough to put their thefts in security. The retrenching of part of those officers of all ranks, with which the bar and the finances abounded, and which was done at this time, was looked upon as the work of the chamber of justice. The great number of those officers, as well as their extreme licentiousness, are indubitable testimonies of the calamities that are introduced into a state, and the forerunners of its ruin.

II. In May the king and queen went to celebrate the jubilee at Orleans. I attended their majesties half a league beyond Fontainebleau, from whence they proceeded that evening to Puiseaux. I took advantage of this little vacation, to visit the estate of Baugy, which had been just awarded to me by a decree, for the great sums which were due to me from this estate, and upon which I began to build immediately with the confiscated money I have lately mentioned. I was stopped within two leagues from the place where I intended to sleep, by a courier from his majesty, who called out to me while I was yet a great way before him. He brought me a letter from the king, which contained only these few words:

" My friend, I gave you six days for your journey
" to Baugy, but I have received letters of great
" consequence from Buzenval, which I want to
" shew you, and to know your opinion on the design
" which is mentioned in them. You will oblige
" me, if you will come and sleep to-night here at

"Puiseaux, whither you need bring no necessaries, "as I have given directions for your lodging, and "sent thither my hunting bed, and have ordered "Coquet to get your supper ready, and your breakfast in the morning, for I will detain you no "longer. Adieu, my beloved friend."

I wished my wife, who accompanied me, a good night, and, taking with me only two gentlemen, a page, a valet de chambre, and one groom, I turned back to Puiseaux, where I found the king, who was amusing himself with seeing the youth of his train wrestle and leap in the court-yard of the priory. As soon as he saw me, he called Pasquier, who had been sent to him by Villeroi with Buzenval's letters, which informed the king that prince Maurice had reviewed all the troops that had been in garrison during the winter, and selected from them the best, with which he had formed a fine army, well provided with every thing necessary for its supply during a long march, there being two thousand carriages with provisions, ammunition, and other stores attached to it: that, with this army, he intended (as Buzenval had learned from the prince of Orange's officers, and from the prince himself) to cross Brabant, the country of Liege, Hainault, and Artois, to gain by it the rivers along the frontiers of France, from whence he expected assistance, and bring the war to the neighbourhood of Gravelines, Berque-Saint-Vinox, Dunkirk, and Nieuport; that the archduke, greatly inferior to the prince of Orange, not having yet received the troops which he expected from Italy and Germany, beheld these preparations with astonishment, and durst not oppose his march, but contented himself with keeping near him, that he might oblige him to march in a narrow compass, and that while he obstructed him he might be himself near the place where he perceived the storm would break. Buzenval concluded by saying, that, finding this step, which had been communicated to him, of great importance, he thought it was necessary to inform the king of it.

The knowledge I had of the Low Countries made this design of the prince of Orange appear to me so dangerous, that I thought it likely to draw upon him a total defeat. He would be obliged to march a great way within view of the enemy, and upon their frontiers, through countries so full of woods, hedges, and hollow ways, particularly in the country of Liege, that I thought them impassable for such a number of waggons; and the king was of the same opinion. After we had conferred together a long time, he resolved to send prince Maurice his sentiments on it, and I resumed my route to Baugy, in which I visited the lands of Sully, that I had a design of purchasing, and did so accordingly the following year. The king continued his journey to Orleans to pay his devotions, and laid there the first stone for the rebuilding the church of the Holy Cross: he afterwards returned to Paris, to which place I had come three days before his arrival.

Henry's letter changed the design of Nassau; he besieged Rhimberg, and took it on the tenth of June. The archduke Albert, in revenge, invested Ostend* on the fifth of July. Maurice, on his side, laid siege to Bolduc, either to force the archduke to abandon his enterprise, or to indemnify himself by the reduction of this place, which was looked upon to be the most important fortress in Brabant.

---

* It will be often mentioned, this siege, in which many brave actions were performed on both sides, having lasted above three years; but for a minute detail of them consult M. de Thou, Le Septennaire, and other historians.

I was still of opinion that he would do neither; and when the king sent for me to hear my sentiments of it in the presence of the courtiers who were by when the pacquet which brought the news was opened, and who all spoke differently of it, I said, that although I was very young when I visited Bolduc, I had nevertheless preserved the remembrance of the place, and that, not to mention its situation, which rendered the siege of it a work of immense labour, it seemed to me impossible, considering the extent of the place, and the great number of its inhabitants, to surround it in such a manner as to hinder any one from going in or out, at least without an army of twenty-five thousand men. In effect, the prince of Orange failed in his attempt upon Bolduc: but all this did not happen till November.

The war breaking out so near our frontiers, made Henry resolve to go to Calais, as if he had no other design but to visit that part of the country. Although he always suspected the Spaniards, he was not apprehensive, in the then state of their affairs, that they would be prevailed on to break the peace: but he was not displeased at having an opportunity to give them a little uneasiness, in revenge for the daily occasions of discontent which he received from them They did enough to oblige his majesty to do something more than this, had not policy prevailed over resentment. After many fruitless attempts to break the alliance between the Swiss cantons and France, and to hinder the pope from acting as arbitrator in the dispute about the marquisate of Saluces, because his holiness could not dispense with giving judgment against the duke of Savoy, they had sent troops to that prince in the late campaign, under the command of the count de Fuentes.

Their continued intrigues with marshal Biron, Bouillon, d'Auvergne, the prince of Joinville, and several other persons, were known to every one; Biron himself had confessed it to his majesty: and, lastly, the king, at his return from Orleans, received certain intelligence of their practices with the cities of Metz, Marseilles, and Bayonne. His majesty dissembled his displeasure at all this; but nothing provoked him against Spain so much as the outrage which la Rochepot,* his ambassador at Madrid, his nephew, and his whole suite, had received from that court. La Rochepot gave an account of it in his letters. "I swear by heaven," said Henry, transported with rage, "that, if I can but once see my "affairs in good order, and get a sufficient supply of "money, and whatever else is necessary, I will make "so furious a war upon them, that they shall repent "of having obliged me to take up arms." However, he still shut his eyes upon so glaring a violation of the rights of nations, but it was not without doing great violence to his inclinations. "I see "plainly," said this prince to me sometimes, "that "through emulation, jealousy, and interest of state, "France and Spain can never be on friendly terms "with each other, and that a proper security against "that power must have some other foundation than

---

* Antony de Silly, count de la Rochepot. His nephew happening to bathe himself with some French gentlemen, was insulted by some Spaniards who threw his clothes, and those of his companions, into the river. They revenged themselves for the affront by killing and wounding some of the Spaniards; those who fled returned soon after to force open the ambassador's house, and thence dragged his nephew to prison, with others of his associates who had taken shelter there. This difference was compromised by the pope, who caused the prisoners to be sent to him to Rome, and delivered them to the count de Bethune, brother to M. de Sully, the French ambassador at that court. See the abovementioned historians for the year 1601.

"words." He was sufficiently convinced of the error in Villeroi and Sillery's policy, who often, in his presence, maintained, in opposition to me, that a strict union with Spain was not only neither impossible nor dangerous for France, but likewise the most reasonable system of politics that ought to be embraced. To their arguments I opposed that competition so natural to these two crowns, the opposition of their interests, and the remembrance of so many recent injuries; and I concluded that, with so artful and unjust a neighbour, the necessary measures to be taken were to hold them always suspected, and to be always prepared for defence. The last news that came from Madrid gave me, for this time, the advantage over my opponents, at least in the king's opinion, who hesitated no longer about going to the neighbourhood of Ostend, after he had dismissed two celebrated embassies, which he received about this time.

One of these embassies was from the grand seignor, who sent to confirm the ancient alliances between the Ottoman and French courts, he having learnt that the sophy of Persia, his enemy, had sent a solemn deputation to the pope, the emperor, and the king of Spain (without taking any notice of the king of France), to form an alliance with them, and to entreat their assistance, and that he had received such promises as he desired. The Porte, on this occasion, made use of his physician, who was a Christian,* and invested him with the dignity of his ambassador. The terms in which this haughty potentate expressed himself, with regard to the French,* discovered a distinction and respect, of which there are few examples; he set a higher value, he said, upon the friendship and arms of the French, than those of all the other Christian nations together; and that although they should all unite with Persia against him, he should think himself in a condition to despise their attempts, as soon as he had secured the alliance and assistance of a king, whose superiority over his neighbours, as well as his great personal qualities, he appeared not to be ignorant of. The Turkish ambassador presented his majesty with several rich presents, and gave me two scymetars of exquisite workmanship, which I keep with great care.

---

* Bartholemew Cœur, a renegado of Marseilles. He demanded of the king that the duke of Mercœur should be recalled from Hungary, because, among the prophesies which the Turks believe, there is one, they say, that the French shall drive the Turks out of Europe.

The other ambassador was from the republic of Venice: this state had been a long time, by a particular alliance often renewed, and by their common interest, united with France against the Spanish power: it had been amongst the first to compliment his most Christian majesty upon his marriage and the peace, by the sieurs Gradenigo and Delfin, the last of whom was likewise in this embassy. Henry was desirous that these ambassadors should be received with the utmost distinction in Paris. He ordered them to be served with his own plate, and loaded them with presents of equal value with those he gave the first. The letters he then wrote to me turned almost wholly upon this subject, for he was then at Fontainebleau with the queen, who was far advanced in her pregnancy, upon which account the king could not come immediately to Paris, and still less the queen, who had so great a concern in this embassy. His majesty shewed so much respect for the Venetian ambassadors, as not to suffer them to wait for his return to Paris, but let them know that he would receive them at Fontainebleau, to which place his coaches and equipages carried them.

---

* The terms in which the Porte addressed Henry were these: To the most glorious, most magnanimous, and most illustrious prince of the faith of Jesus . . . the composer of the differences that happen between Christian potentates, prince of grandeur, majesty and opulence, and the glorious leader of the greatest subjects, Henry the IVth, emperor of France. Manuscripts de la Biblioth. du Roi, vol. 9592.

The archdukes could not fail to suspect, that the king, by marching towards Calais, would endeavour to obstruct their designs upon Ostend, by way of reprisal for the ill treatment la Rochepot had received. In order to discover the purport of this journey, they deputed to him the count of Solre in the quality of ambassador, under a pretence of making him the same compliments on the queen's pregnancy which he received from all parts; enjoining this ambassador to insinuate a complaint of his journey, by which Solre gave a fair opportunity to the king, who, instead of satisfying him as to the occasion of his complaints, made, in his turn, very heavy ones against Spain, assuring him, however, but in general terms, that he would not be the first to come to a rupture, provided the Spaniards did not force him to it by continuing their unfair proceedings. With this promise the ambassador pretended to be satisfied.

The queen of England hearing the king was at Calais, thought it a favourable opportunity to satisfy her impatience of seeing and embracing her best friend. Henry was not less desirous of this interview, that he might confer with the queen upon the affairs of Europe in general, as well as on their own in particular, especially those which had been hinted to him by the English and Dutch ambassadors when he was at Nantz. Elizabeth first wrote him a letter equally polite and full of offers of service; she afterwards made him the usual compliments, and repeated those assurances by the lord Edmond,* whom she dispatched to Calais, till she herself could arrive at Dover, from whence she sent M. de Stafford lord Sidney,† with other letters.

Henry resolving not to be outdone in complaisance, answered these advances in a manner that shewed at once his respect for Elizabeth, and his esteem and admiration of her character. This intercourse continued a long time, to the great mortification of the Spaniards, whose jealousy was strongly excited by the proximity and close correspondence of the two sovereigns. Of all the letters wrote by them on this occasion, I possess only one of those which Elizabeth wrote to the king: this, because it was the occasion of the voyage I made to this princess I have kept in my hands; it was as follows:

"My very dear, and well beloved brother, I had "always considered the condition of sovereigns to be "the most happy, and that they were the least subject "to meet with obstacles in the way of their just and "legitimate desires; but our residence in two places "so near each other makes me begin to think, that "those of high as well as of middle rank often meet

---

* He means Sir Thomas Edmondes. See Birch's Negociations, p. 200, Camden, &c. Edit.

† The person here styled "Stafford lord Sidney," was sir Robert Sydney, the younger brother of the illustrious sir Philip. He was not a peer till after the accession of James, who first created him baron Sydney of Penshurst, next viscount Lisle, and lastly earl of Leicester. Why he is called Stafford in the text it is not easy to say, unless we could suppose the author has confounded him with sir Edward Stafford, ambassador in France in 1588. Edit.

" with thorns and difficulties, since from certain " causes, and considerations, rather to satisfy others " than ourselves, we are both prevented from crossing the sea; for I had promised myself the " happiness of embracing you, as being your very " loyal sister, and faithful ally, and you my very " dear brother whom I love and honour above every " thing in this world, whose incomparable virtues " (to tell you my real sentiments,) I admire, and " particularly your valour in arms, and politeness " and gallantry amongst the fair sex. I have something of consequence to communicate to you, " which I can neither write nor confide to any of " your ministers, nor my own at present, so that, in " expectation of a more convenient opportunity, I " shall return to London in a few days. That God " may continue to you, my very dear and well-beloved brother, his holy favours and blessing, is " the prayer of your most affectionate sister and " loyal ally, ELIZABETH."*

---

* This letter, and this whole relation of the duke of Sully's concerning Henry the IVth's journey to Calais and Elizabeth's to Dover, appear sufficient, without any other reflections, to shew the error of all those various judgments current at that time, and which have been mentioned by different historians, concerning these two potentates. It was said Elizabeth proposed to Henry, either that he should come to Dover, or at least confer with her in a vessel half way between these two towns, and that this proposal concealed a snare in which Elizabeth hoped to entrap Henry, by seizing upon his person in the interview, and keeping him prisoner till he restored Calais, and that Henry excused himself from complying with her request, only because he suspected the design; others say, because his fears of the sea were so great, that he durst not venture into a vessel. No one suspected the true motive for proposing this interview, which was the occasion of all these letters that passed between them, and caused the duke of Sully to make the secret voyage to Dover, of which he here gives an account. Siri, on this occasion builds upon the resentment which he supposes Elizabeth always pre-

When the king received this letter, he read it over two or three times with great satisfaction, and took particular notice of the latter part of it; but being at a loss how to interpret it, he sent secretary Feret for me, and as soon as I went to him, he said to me "I have just received a letter from my good sister, the queen of England, whom you esteem so highly, more full of cajoleries than ever; pray see if, from your knowledge of her character, you can comprehend better than me, what she means by the conclusion of this letter." Having read it over several times, but being obliged to confess I could not comprehend it, "Well, my friend," said his majesty, "I will not conceal from you, that I am very "anxious to know what this princess has in view by "these expressions, for, in my opinion, she has not "employed them without very particular reasons: I "have therefore thought of an expedient by which "perhaps, we may come to a knowledge of her meaning, without doing any thing that can give offence "to either party; this is, for you to set out to-morrow "morning for Dover, as if by your own inclination, "and on your arrival there, to make show of not "wishing to stop, but of passing on to London, for "the purpose of seeing the country; so that, should "you meet with any person of your acquaintance, the "queen may be informed that you are in Dover to "watch what she will do; and should she send for

---

served, both at the peace of Vervins and the surrender of Calais, as well as her fear lest Henry should aggrandise himself too much, and on the jealousy which the English entertained of the French. Mem. Recond. vol. I. p. 130, 150, &c. But this writer, so well acquainted with foreign negociations, especially those of Italy and Spain, is not right, neither in the facts nor the opinions which he produces concerning the interior of our court and councils under the reign of Henry the IVth. He knew neither this prince nor the duke of Sully.

" you, it is probable you may discover some part of " her sentiments in the course of your conversation " together."

I accordingly embarked early next morning, in a small boat, with very few attendants, without mentioning my journey to any one, and reached Dover about ten o'clock, where I saw a great number of people, some embarking, others landing, and many walking upon the beach; six or seven of the latter advanced towards me, one of whom was lord Sidney, who having five or six days before seen me at Calais immediately recognized me, and ran to embrace me: with him were Cobham, Raleigh, and Griffin, and they were soon after joined by the earls of Devonshire and Pembroke, who, after mutual civilities and compliments, asked me if I were come to see the queen on the part of my master? I told them I was not, and even assured them that the king knew nothing of my voyage; I likewise entreated them not to mention it to the queen, for not having had any intention of paying my respects to her I had no letter to present, my design being only to make a short tour incognito to London. These gentlemen replied smiling, that I had taken a useless precaution, for that probably the guardship had already given a signal of my arrival, and that I might quickly expect to see a messenger from the queen, who would not suffer me to pass in this manner, she having but three days ago spoke of me publicly, and in very obliging terms. I affected to be extremely concerned at this unlucky accident, but to hope nevertheless, that I might still pass undiscovered, provided that these gentlemen would be secret as to the place where I was to lodge; from whence, I assured them, I would immediately depart as soon as I had taken a little refreshment: saying this I left them abruptly, and had but just entered my apartment, and spoke a few words to one of my secretaries, when I heard somebody behind me tell me that he arrested me as a prisoner to the queen. This was the captain of her majesty's guards, whom I embraced, and answered smiling, that I should esteem such imprisonment a great honour. He had orders to conduct me directly to the queen; I therefore followed him. As soon as Elizabeth perceived me, she exclaimed, " Well! monsieur de Rosny, and do " you thus break our fences and pass on without " coming to see me? I am greatly surprised at it, for " I thought you bore me more affection than any of " my own servants, and I am persuaded that I have " given you no cause to change those sentiments." I replied, that her majesty had always so highly honoured me, and testified so much good will towards me, that I loved and honoured her for her excellent virtues, and would always serve her most humbly, not merely from my own inclination, but also from knowing that in doing so, I was rendering an acceptable service to my king. After many more expressions of this sort, the queen replied, " Well " monsieur de Rosny, to give you a proof, that I believe all you have told me of the good-will of the " king my brother, and of your own, I will speak " with you on the subject of the last letter I wrote " to him; though perhaps you have seen it, for " Stafford* and Edmondes tell me, that the king conceals few of his secrets from you." On telling her I was not ignorant of the letter, she immediately answered that she was glad of it, and also that I had crossed the sea, because she had no difficulty to tell me freely what she hinted at in the conclusion of her letter. She then drew me aside, and conversed with me a long time on the greater part of the events which had happened since the peace of Vervins (too long to be repeated here), and concluded with asking if her good brother the king's affairs were now in a better state than in 1598, and if he were in a condition to begin, in good earnest, the great design which she had proposed from that time? To this I replied, that although since that period, the king had had many weighty affairs to settle, as well in relation to the war in Savoy, as to several plots in the heart of his kingdom, which were not yet entirely destroyed, all which had occasioned very heavy expenses, yet I had nevertheless so managed the revenue, and other departments of the state, that a numerous artillery had been provided, as well as abundance of stores and provision, and even of money; but that all this, however, was not sufficient to advise him to bear alone the burthen of an open war against the whole house of Austria, who was so powerful, that it would be in vain to attack her partially; that it even appeared to me, that the assistance of England and the states only was by no means sufficient for the commencement of so great a work, but that it was absolutely necessary to endeavour to form a coalition of all the other kings, princes, republics, and people, who dreaded the tyranny of that house, or would profit by its humiliation. The queen here told me she was very happy she had heard my sentiments on this subject, and the more so as she believed that I had not said so much without knowing something of the intentions of the king her brother, with which, in this case, her's would perfectly agree, by only adding certain conditions, which she considered as absolutely necessary to prevent misunderstanding and distrust among the coalesced powers; these, in her opinion, would be, to proportion so well the desires of each, that none might be entertained either prejudicial or disagreeable to any of the rest, which would inevitably happen if the more powerful wished to take the greatest share of the conquests and the distribution of them; and that above all things it was necessary that neither her brother, the king of France, nor the king of Scotland, who would certainly inherit her crown, nor those of Denmark and Sweden, who might become very powerful both by land and sea, nor herself, consequently, should pretend to claim any portion of the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries, nor any place in their neighbourhood; "For, to "conceal nothing from you," continued the queen, "if my brother, the king of France, should think of "making himself proprietor, or even only feodal "lord of the United Provinces, I should never consent to it, but entertain a most violent jealousy of "him; nor should I blame him, if, giving him the "same occasion, he should have the same fears of "me; and so of all the other states and dignities of "which the ambitious house of Austria may be deprived."

---

* This must be a mistake for Sydney. See note p. 425.

These were not the only reflections made by the queen of England; she said many other things, which appeared to me so just and sensible, that I was filled with astonishment and admiration. It is not unusual to behold princes form great designs; their sphere of action so forcibly inclines them to this, that it is only necessary to warn them of the extreme, which is, the projecting what their powers are so little proportioned to perform, that they scarce ever find themselves able to execute the half of what they purpose; but to be able to distinguish and form only such as are reasonable; wisely to regulate the conduct of them; to foresee and guard against all obstacles in such a manner, that when they happen, nothing more will be necessary, than to apply the remedies prepared long before; this is what few princes are capable of. Ignorance, prosperity, luxury, vanity, nay, even fear and indolence, daily produce schemes, to execute which there is not the least possibility. Another cause of surpise to me, was, that Elizabeth and Henry, having never conferred together on their political project, should agree so exactly in all their ideas, as not to differ even in the most minute particulars.*

The queen observing my eyes were attentively fixed on her without speaking, imagined she had expressed herself so confusedly in something she had said, that I was unable to comprehend her meaning. But when I ingenuously confessed to her the true cause of my silence and surprise, she then, without scruple, entered into the most minute parts of the design: but as I shall have an ample occasion to treat of this, in relating the great schemes which were prevented by the untimely death of Henry IV. I shall not trouble the reader with useless repetitions; but in this place just shew the five principal points to which her majesty reduced so extensive a scheme, as from the sequel of these Memoirs this will appear to have been. The first was, to restore Germany to its ancient liberty, in respect to the election of its emperors, and the nomination of a king of the Romans. The second, to render the United Provinces absolutely independent of Spain; and to form them into a republic, by annexing to them, if necessary, some provinces dismembered from Germany. The third, to do the same in regard to Switzerland, by incorporating with it some of the adjacent provinces, particularly Alsace and Franche-Comté. The fourth, to divide all Christendom into a certain number of powers, as equal as might be. The fifth, to reduce all the various religions in it under those three which should appear to be most numerous and considerable in Europe.

---

* As Hume has quoted the above passage, I will here show what authority the modern compiler of these Memoirs had for inserting it, by giving the words as they stand in the original Memoirs of Sully; they will moreover afford another instance how strangely that work has been in many instances garbled and misrepresented: Sully (i. e. his secretaries) says, that, after Elizabeth had asked him if, from his silence, he did not comprehend, or approve of her schemes, he replied in the following words: "Madam, my silence does not "proceed from disapprobation of what you have told me, but, on "the contrary, from my admiration of the excellence of your mind, "your exalted courage, your foresight, and your judgment; nor "can I deny that I have frequently made similar propositions "to the king my master, and that I have often found him dis-"posed to adopt plans conformable to those your majesty has just "mentioned to me." This is all the authority for the passage in the text, which, to say nothing of its improbability, the compiler ought to have seen, was in some degree contradicted by what goes before, where the queen at the beginning of her conversation, asks Sully if the king's affairs were in a better state than in 1598, and if he were in a condition to begin, in good earnest, the great design which she had proposed ever since that period. This certainly implies that Henry knew what that great design was, and that some communications had been made respecting it. Edit.

Our conference was very long: I cannot bestow praises upon the queen of England that would be equal to the merit which I discovered in her in this short time, both as to the qualities of the heart and the understanding. I gave an exact relation of every thing that passed between us to the king, who very highly approved of all she had said to me. Their majesties corresponded by letters during the rest of the time they staid at Dover and Calais. All preliminaries were agreed on; measures were taken even on the grand object of the design, but with such secrecy, that the whole of this affair remained to the death of the king, and even much longer, among the number of those on which only various and uncertain conjectures are formed.[*]

The king did not return to Paris till he had carefully examined all the fortresses upon his frontier, and provided for their security: in every other respect, he appeared an indifferent spectator of the quarrel between the Spaniards and the Flemings; and all he did in favour of Ostend, the siege of which was still continued, was not to hinder some French from engaging in the service of the prince of Orange, in which several of them lost their lives; amongst these, the death of young Chatillon-Coligny,[*] whose head was shot off by a cannon-ball before Ostend, deserved to be particularly lamented. The king, when he was told it, said publicly, that France had lost a man of great merit: myself, in particular, was sensibly afflicted at his death. Coligny, at an early age, had already united almost all the qualities that form a soldier; valour, moderation, prudence, judgment, and the art of making himself equally beloved by the soldier and officer. But Coligny was a Protestant; and the jealousy of the courtiers soon converted all these virtues into so many crimes, in the opinion of the king; they told his majesty, that he already aspired to the distinction of being head of the Protestants, both within and without, the kingdom, to which he was solicited by the duke of Bouillon; that he desired nothing with so much ardour as to equal, or even to surpass, the actions of his father and grandfather; and had been heard to declare, that he should not regret the loss of life, if he had the satisfaction to lose it at the head of an army, fighting for the preservation of his friends. His affection for the soldiers was treated as an artful and dangerous artifice. They had hinted to the king, that he had already raised a jealousy in the prince of Orange; and that his majesty would one day have reason to fear a shoot from a stock that had given so much trouble to our kings. Henry was so far influenced by these insinuations, that when I went to ask some favours of him for the mother and brother of Coligny, he dwelt continually upon what he had heard, and had given but too much credit to, and appeared to me not only full of indifference for the death of Coligny, but also so greatly prejudiced against the whole family, that I desisted from a solicitation which could not but be prejudicial to myself, my connections and conformity of religion with the deceased considered.

---

[*] Camden and the other writers of this period seem not to have known of the marquis of Rosny's visit: the former says, when the queen heard that Henry was at Calais, she sent over to him sir Thomas Edmondes to see him, and congratulate his health; he again to acknowledge this courtesy sent to the queen marshal Biron, &c. Edit.

[†] Henry de Coligny, lord of Chatillon, son to Francis, and grandson to the admiral de Coligny: he carried to the assistance of Ostend a regiment of 800 French. According to Brantome, the house of Chatillon Coligny came originally from Savoy, of a very noble and ancient lineage, as he says, and who were formerly sovereign princes, and very powerful. Tom. III. p. 173.

The king, at his return to Fontainebleau, had the pleasure to find the queen in as good a state of health as he left her. He was seldom from her during her pregnancy, and took all possible care of her health.* In a letter he wrote to me some days before the queen lay in, he says, "Bring no people of "business with you at this time; no mention must "be made of it during the first week of my wife's "lying in; we shall have sufficient employment to "hinder her from getting cold."

---

* "We read," says Bayle, in the Rep. de Lett. for January, 1686, "that Henry recommended to Louisa Bourgeois, a very skilful mid- "wife, who laid the queen, to perform her office so carefully, as that

At length, the moment that was to fill the king, the queen, and the whole kingdom with joy, arrived; on the 17th of September* the queen was delivered of a son, whose strong health, as well as the queen's, filled the kingdom with the most agreeable hopes.† I believe I may venture to affirm, that this incident gave me more joy than any one else. I was attached to the king's person by the most tender ties of affection, an affection which I felt in a higher degree than the most faithful of his subjects, and was therefore more interested in his happiness. He was so well convinced of this truth, that he did me the honour to give me notice of the birth of his son in a note which he sent, at ten o'clock at night, from Fontainebleau to Paris, where I then was; it contained only these few words: "The queen is just delivered of a son; I "send you the news, that you may rejoice with me." Besides this note, which he wrote as to a friend, he sent me another the next morning by la-Varenne,

---

"there might be no occasion for employing a man-midwife; since "this, he added, would shock female modesty."

* On Thursday night, about midnight.

† Perefixe says, "The king, imploring the blessing of heaven "upon the infant, gave him also his own benediction, and put his "sword into his hand, praying God, that he would be pleased to "give him grace to make use of it only for his glory, and the de- "fence of his people." Matthieu speaks in the very same terms: "My dearest," said he to the queen, "be of good cheer, for God "has granted us what we desired." This writer adds, that a shock of an earthquake was felt two hours after midnight. Tom. II. l. iii. p. 441.

as master-general of the ordnance; he there mentioned the birth of the Dauphin as an occasion of inexpressible delight to him, "Not so much," said he, "for the near concern I have in this incident, "as for the general good of my subjects." He ordered me to fire the cannon of the Arsenal, which was performed in such a manner, that the report was heard even at Fontainebleau. On this occasion it was not necessary to order public rejoicings: all his majesty's subjects, from the first to the meanest, concurred in giving demonstrations of it, in which fear and policy had no part.

The king's satisfaction was only interrupted by a slight indisposition, which he had drawn upon himself. La-Riviere* was his first physician, a man who had little more religion than those generally have who blend it with the profession of judicial astrology; yet the world did him the honour to suppose, that he concealed the principles of a Protestant under the appearance of a Catholic. Henry, who already felt a tenderness for his son, that filled him with an eager anxiety to know his fate, having heard that la-Riviere had often succeeded wonderfully in his predictions, commanded him to calculate the Dauphin's nativity with all the ceremonies of his art; and that the exact moment of his birth might be known, had carefully sought for the most excellent watch that could be procured. It appeared, that the king thought no more of this design till about a fortnight after, when he and I being alone together, the conversation turned upon the predictions of La Brosse, which I have formerly mentioned, concerning his majesty and me, which we had found so exactly accomplished. Henry's inclination to make the experiment with his son receiving new strength by this discourse, he ordered la-Riviere to be sent for.

---

* La Riviere succeeded d'Alibour in the place of first physician: he had been in the family of the duke of Bouillon, who resigned him to the king.

The physician, without taking any notice of it, had proceeded in his work. "M. de la-Riviere," said the king to him, "we have been talking of "astrology; what have you discovered concerning "my son?" "I had begun my calculations," replied la-Riviere, "but I left them unfinished, not "caring any longer to amuse myself with a science "which I have always believed to be in some degree criminal." The king immediately discovered that this answer was not sincere, and that he concealed his thoughts, either through an apprehension of offending his majesty, or from an effect of ill-humour, whim, or the caution of an astrologer, who held it dangerous to disclose his secrets. "I see "plainly," said Henry, "that you are not restrained "by motives of conscience; you are not of the "number of persons who are so very scrupulous; "but, in reality, you are afraid of not being able to "tell me the truth, or of making me angry; but "whatever it be, I will know it, and I command "you, on my displeasure, to speak freely." La-Riviere suffered himself to be pressed still longer; and at last, with a discontented air, either real or dissembled, said, "Sire, your son will live out the "common age of a man, and will reign longer "than you; but his inclination and yours will be "very different; he will be obstinate in his opinions, often governed by his own whims, and "sometimes by those of others: it will be safer then "to think than to speak: impending ruin threatens "your former society: all the effects of your prudence will be destroyed: he will perform great

" things, will be fortunate in his designs, and make " a great figure in Europe: in his time there will be " a vicissitude of peace and war: he will have children; and after him things will grow worse. " This is all you can know from me, and more than " I had resolved to tell you." The king, after musing a little while on what he had heard, said to la-Riviere, " You mean the Protestants, I know; but " you speak thus because you are well inclined towards them." " I understand," said la-Riviere, " what you would have, but I shall say no more." His majesty and I continued together a long time in conversation, making reflections on every word that had been spoken by la-Riviere, which remained strongly impressed on the king's mind.

It was not possible for me to stay long at Fontainebleau; but the king continued to give me, with great kindness, an account of every thing that happened. " You cannot imagine," says he in one of his letters, " how well my wife is recovered of her " lying-in; she dresses her head herself, and talks " already of getting up." In another, nine days after her delivery, he says, " The queen goes already into her closet; she has a constitution surprisingly strong: my son likewise is very well, I " thank God: these are the best news I can send a " faithful and affectionate servant, whom I tenderly " love."* Henry sent his son to Saint-Germain to be nursed, on account of the goodness of the air; and by one of those little strokes of popularity which shew the heart better than more ostentatious actions, he would have him shewn to all Paris; for which purpose, he was carried openly through the midst of that great city. The Parisians, by repeated acclamations, expressed their pleasure at this sight.

---

* The original of this letter of Henry IV. to M. de Sully is still extant; it is dated from Fontainebleau, the 27th of August. Cabinet de M. le duc de Sully.

The king had made a promise to the queen that, if she brought him a son, he would present her with the castle of Monçeaux. "My wife," said he, in a letter to me, "has gained Monçeaux, by giving me "a son; therefore I desire you will send for the president Forget, to confer with him about this affair, "and take his advice concerning the security that "must be given to my children, for the sum which "I pay for Monçeaux." The city of Paris having likewise promised the queen a present of a suit of tapestry hangings for her lying-in, his majesty, in this letter, reminded me to demand it. An infanta* was born in Spain, about the same time that Providence gave a prince to France.

III. The negociation, so many years pending with the grand duke of Florence, was concluded this year: that the reader may understand the occasion of it, it is necessary he should know, that, under the reign of Henry the Third, Ferdinand de Medicis, grand duke of Florence, took advantage of the troubles which then raged in France, to possess himself of the little isles of Pomegue, Ratoneau, and If, with its castle, in the neighbourhood of Marseilles. Henry, fully resolved to make the grand duke restore them, ordered d'Ossat, who was then on the other side of the Alps, to demand them, in the year 1598. The grand duke not daring to refuse them absolutely, represented only, that he had expended great sums of money upon these isles, which he could not resolve to lose: d'Ossat of himself removed this obstacle, by engaging that the king his master should indemnify him for these expenses, by paying him three hundred thousand crowns, for which twelve of the richest and most considerable persons in France should be security,* as if his majesty alone had not been sufficient to answer for so small a sum! The king, without attending particularly to this condition, ratified the treaty; and a short time after the chevalier Vinta was sent by the duke of Florence to conclude, with Gondy, the business of the isles upon this plan.

---

* Anna Maria Mauriette, afterwards queen of France, born the 22d of September.

The two agents did not go out of the council to seek for their securities, and the affair was proposed to me among the rest: this method of proceeding with a king, whose power no part of Europe was ignorant of, appeared to me so uncommon, that I could not help laughing at those who mentioned it to me. Villeroi took pains to represent to me the necessity of disengaging d'Ossat from his word: I replied, that there never had been any bankers in my family; for indeed, this was rather the business of bankers than of gentlemen. None of the others, said Villeroi, have made any difficulty about it. I believe it, answered I, with some indignation, for they are all either descended from traders or lawyers.

---

* This is, in effect, the import of the fifth article of the treaty concluded on the 1st of May, 1598, between the king of France and the grand duke of Tuscany, by the intervention of cardinal d'Ossat, which may be seen at full length at the end of the collection of this cardinal's letters. The duke of Sully does not here reproach M. d'Ossat with any thing which he had not already excused in the letter which he wrote to his majesty, on the 5th of May, 1598, immediately after the conclusion of this treaty, and likewise in that to M. de Villeroi, of the 4th of August following. He afterwards cleared himself more fully, in a long memorial, which is also inserted at the end of that collection. However, we cannot think the reasons which M. de Sully produces against this convention groundless, nor believe that the duke of Florence would have broke the treaty without that condition.

Hereupon there arose a dispute in the council, which was reported to the king, who only smiled, and said they had done wrong to mention it to me without first informing him, since he had not acquainted me with it himself. "I am astonished," added he, "that he did not give a still ruder "answer: you cannot be ignorant of his tem-"per, and how highly he values himself upon "the nobility of his birth: let this affair be con-"cluded without his or any other person's entering "into any obligation: I gave no permission to the "bishop of Rennes to agree to such an expedient." The grand duke did not allow himself to be solicited upon this head; he set the king free from the obligation of the twelve securities, out of regard to his person. The act for it was passed on the fourth of August, 1598, but the affair was not concluded on either side till the chevalier Vinta arrived in 1601.

I was likewise employed to settle certain estates in Piedmont, for which the count of Soissons was desirous of treating with his majesty: they came to him by the death of the princess of Conti, in right of his wife, who was of the house of Montaffié.* My report was not very favourable for the count: I represented to the king, that these estates, which had been too highly valued, were likewise subject to so much litigation, and were so disadvantageously situated, that these considerations ought greatly to lessen the price. The count of Soissons thought proper to dissemble the resentment he entertained against me for this declaration.

---

* The prince of Conti was first married to Jane de Coëme, lady Bonnetable, and widow of Lewis count de Montaffié in Piedmont: and the count de Soissons had married Anne de Montaffié, daughter to that Lewis by the said Jane de Coëme.

Fresne-Canaye* was appointed ambassador to Venice, and Bethune, my brother, to Rome, to the great mortification of the other ministers, especially Villeroi and Sillery, with whom I often had disputes, which the king had many times endeavoured to prevent. These two gentlemen had undertaken to exclude me from any concern in foreign affairs, the cognizance of which, they pretended, belonged only to them. The nomination to embassies falling under this head, they told his majesty, in my presence, that, for the embassy to Rome, they had abler persons to propose to him than Bethune, who, they said, had no knowledge of the affairs of that court, and had not yet performed any considerable service to the state. My brother had, however, already been charged with an embassy to Scotland, of which he had acquitted himself well; and it could not be denied that he was circumspect, wise, and honest; qualities which, in my opinion, are not among the least that are essential to an ambassador. What these gentlemen said, therefore, was as false as it was comtemptuous; and this I made them sensible of in my answer, by shewing them the value of those services which the state received from the military art, and which those gentlemen seemed to place below all others.

Villeroi, piqued in his turn that I had not given the first rank to his, maintained his cause with great heat and animosity. His majesty found himself obliged to command us to be silent, telling us, that he was offended at our holding such discourse in his presence; and that, without entering into a discussion of our services, we ought to be satisfied that he was pleased with them. I asked the king's pardon for daring, after this prohibition, to add a few words to close the mouths of persons who so unjustly placed the lazy business of the law, and the quiet employments of the cabinet, above the toils, the dangers, and expense of the military profession; and I truly spoke my sentiments of such partiality. "Well, well," said Henry, interrupting me, "I pardon you all, and take your words, as I "must, but upon condition, that, for the future, "you will avoid these little debates, and that when "one of you recommends his friend to my favour, "the others do not oppose it, but submit to my "choice: at present I determine in favour of the "sieur de Bethune, whose family, wisdom, probity, "and even capacity, I esteem, having employed "him in many affairs both of peace and war, of "which he has acquitted himself worthily." The king promised Villeroi that, after my brother's return, he would dispose of the embassy to Rome according to his recommendation. He then put an end to his walk, which this quarrel had protracted to more than two hours, and went to dinner.

---

* Philip Canaye de Fresne:—Philip de Bethune, count de Selles and de Charost.

I went several times this year to Fontainebleau, to receive the king's orders concerning affairs that could no otherwise be communicated to him; and being often, for a considerable time, at a distance from each other, I received, as usual, a great number of letters from this prince: that in which he mentions the marshal d'Ornano,* who had given him some causes of complaint, has something singular in it: "I "never," says Henry, "saw so much obstinacy and "ignorance together in one man, but I pronounced

---

* Alphonso d'Ornano, son to San-Pietro de Bastelica, a colonel of the Swiss.

"him dangerous; he has reached the summit of "insolence. Take care that he gives me no occasion "to be convinced what he is, that is, unworthy of "the honours I have bestowed on him: his fidelity "only could deserve them; his many acts of dis-"obedience will soon take away all claim to that "character: to say the truth, I am quite tired of "him."

The states of Languedoc meeting this year, the king wrote to me, that he must transfer the place of their sitting to the Lower Languedoc, "that my "servants," said he, "may not go first to those of "the league." In another letter, he ordered me to send for some foals of his breed of horses at Meun;*

---

* "From his early years," says Brantome, speaking of Henry II. in his Vies des Hommes Illustres, tom. II. p. 24. "he was always "very fond of the exercise of riding, and kept always a great number "of horses in his grand stables of Tournelles, which were the prin-"cipal, as also at Muns, at St. Leger, and at Oyron, under the "inspection of M. de Boissy, master of the horse, the most valuable "part of which was his breeding mares, wherein he took great "delight." He adds, that, this prince having one day shewn his stables to the emperor's master of the horse, the latter told him, that his master had not near so fine a set of horses, extolling them very highly, especially as the greatest part were of his own breeding. The troubles, during the last reigns, were the cause of the king's breeding stables having then fallen into decay, and of being in a worse condition than they were under Henry II. That of Meun, or Mehun, in Berry, was the only one of the abovementioned places where horses were bred for the king's use; and these stables were very inconsiderable, as may be seen from the archives of the secretary of the king's household, which are kept at Petitsperes in Paris, where Meun is called Main, apparently to distinguish it from another Meun upon the Indre, also in Berry.

In 1604, the duke de Bellegarde, master of the horse, caused Mark Antony de Bazy, captain of the breeding stables, to remove the king's set of mares to St. Leger, a forest belonging to the crown. In 1618 some considerable additions and improvements were made;

and in another, to give two hundred crowns to Garnier, his preacher in Advent and Lent; the rest, which contain only a detail of slight circumstances, I suppress, although they are proofs of the extreme vigilance, and attention of this prince to matters of the smallest consequence.

IV. I shall comprise, in one article, with which the Memoirs of this year will conclude, all that relates to marshal Biron, of whose revolt there was at length the most convincing proofs. After the king had been at Lyons, and had there entertained very strong suspicions against the marshal, his majesty had a private conversation with him in the convent of the Cordeliers, and appeared so well informed of all his transactions with the duke of Savoy, that Biron, either because he then thought that, after such a discovery, all he could do was to repair his fault, or that he sought only to deceive the king, confessed to him, that he had not been able to resist the offers made to him by the duke of Savoy, joined to his promise of giving him the princess,*

---

and greater still about 1665, when the late M. Colbert, minister of state, enlarged the bounds, made parks therein, and got together a great number of stallions and young colts, by means of Alain de Garsault, who was then captain. It continued in this state till 1715, at which time it began to be settled in Normandy, under the direction of Francis Gideon de Garsault, Lewis de Lorraine count d'Armagnac being then master of the horse in France: since this last establishment, it has every day more the appearance of the stables of the most powerful prince in Europe.

* The marshal de Biron, by marrying the duke of Savoy's third daughter, was to have received from the king of Spain, and that duke, the seigniory and investiture of Burgundy, Franche-Comté, and the county de Charlois: this was one part of the grand project of both these courts, which consisted in dismembering, in this manner, the kingdom of France, and parcelling it out among the governors of its provinces. The proof of this may be seen in Vittorio

his daughter, to wife. He asked the king's pardon for these proceedings, and protested to him, with the utmost appearance of sincerity, that he would never again suffer himself to be intoxicated with such expectations.

Henry thought he might depend upon this promise, which, however, was forgot in the same instant it was made. Biron resumed his former designs; went, according to his custom, at different times into the provinces, caressed all the malecontents he found amongst the gentry, entertained them continually with the injustice he received from the king, and his credit and the correspondence he carried on without the kingdom. He entered into stronger engagements than ever with Bouillon, d'Entragues, d'Auvergne, and others.* He, who was pride and fierceness itself, laid such a restraint upon his inclinations, as to appear to the soldiers the most humane and affable man in the world, and drew the affections of the mob by playing the hypocrite and the devotee; for what appearance will not ambition assume to attain its end? Hitherto, however, it might still have been doubted, whether he had not concealed his designs within his own breast, and if this conduct was not an effect of that disposition which is observable in many persons who,

---

Siri, Mem. rec. vol. I. p. 103, 127, who likewise extols the services which the count de Bethune, our author's brother, performed on this occasion to Henry IV. during his embassy at Rome.

* The author says nothing, in all this account of the conspiracy of the marshal Biron, his imprisonment, and the process against him, but what is confirmed by the histories and memoirs of that time: they mention these extravagant words of his; "The king "does not at all hurt me, for I know how to be revenged on "crowned heads, and even emperors." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. 2. p. 333.

by their discourse, appear restless, disturbed, and fond of novelties, yet are far from any intention of throwing themselves headlong into rebellion.

Hence arose Henry's suspense concerning the conduct of marshal Biron, though he still continued to have him carefully observed, and could not help being moved at the accounts that were brought him of his conduct in the last journey he had taken to Dijon, where he had passed the end of the preceding year and the beginning of this. Biron, who on his side had his spies at court, being apprehensive of the impression which his behaviour made on the king, thought proper to write to me on that subject. His letter is dated the third of January; it turned only upon the ill offices that were done him with the king, and the injustice even his majesty did him in believing him capable of designs he had never entertained. He excused his journey to Burgundy, on account of some domestic affairs which made it absolutely necessary; and assured me, that he should leave that province in two days: he concluded with entreating me to believe all that would be told me from him by Prevot, one of his agents, whom he had sent to me. This letter was too soon followed by incontestable proofs of his treachery, to make it be thought sincere; and I was so far from believing his professions in it, that they only increased my suspicions.

During the king's stay at Calais, he received still clearer and more circumstantial informations against Biron, doubtless because the marshal, believing himself less suspected than before, took greater liberties than usual: but Henry, instead of adopting those measures which, in prudence, ought to have been no longer delayed, could not yet look upon this man as incurable; and resolved, if possible, to bring him back to his duty, by gentleness, kindness, and such distinctions as make the strongest impressions upon the heart of an honest man. Biron having demanded a gratuity of thirty thousand crowns from his majesty, the king thought it very reasonable, and granted it immediately; and because that no obstacles should retard the payment of it, this prince ordered me to take proper measures to satisfy Biron without delay; accordingly I paid him instantly one half of the sum in ready money, and assigned him the other half at the expiration of a year.

Biron thought there was a necessity for coming to thank me for this favour; he told me, that he was more obliged to me for it than the king, complaining to me that he had been forgotten, and even despised by this prince, now that he had no longer occasion for his sword, this sword, said he, that has placed him upon the throne. It was impossible for me to keep silence upon this occasion; I represented to the marshal, with a kind of reproach, that he accused Henry so much the more unjustly, as this prince, to whom alone he was obliged for this gratuity, had not disdained to solicit himself for its payment: hence I took occasion to speak with still greater freedom to Biron; I remonstrated to him that, although he should even have proofs of his neglect, he ought always to remember that he spoke of his master, and of a master who, by his personal qualities, still more than by his rank, engaged the esteem and respect of his subjects. I told him, that there was nothing which kings were more sensible of than disrespect to their persons, an envious desire to lessen the glory of their arms, and ingratitude for their benefits. These terms were sufficiently plain, yet I went farther, and if I did not tell Biron positively that I thought him both ungrateful and a traitor, there was nothing to hinder him from concluding it by all my discourse. I exhorted him to encourage a nobler emulation in his breast, which might give him a title to real praises; I dwelt upon the difference there was between making one's self beloved by one's prince and country, and endeavouring to become the object of their fear; a detestable attempt, and almost always fatal to those who make it. I told him, that if he would join with me in mutual labours for the glory of the state and the public good, we might, in some degree, make both depend upon us; he by his abilities for war, I by the share I had in the government at home; and hence we should taste the refined pleasure of knowing ourselves to be either the authors or instruments of every public benefit. I finished my remonstrance by endeavouring to prevail upon him to go and return his majesty thanks for the gratuity he had just received.

To all this Biron, neither moved to gratitude by kindness, nor to repentance by conviction, answered only by exaggerating his own merit so unseasonably and in such boastful terms, that I was now convinced of a thing I had hitherto only suspected, which was, that the harshness of his manners and the inequality of his temper proceeded from a slight taint of madness, for which so much the less allowance was to be made, as that, hindering him from reasoning, it could not hinder him from speaking and acting ill: what appeared to me a complete proof of it was, that, after what I had just said to him, having reason to look upon me as a man in whose presence he could not be too cautious, he was imprudent enough to let something escape him concerning the designs that filled his head. I took no notice of it, but he perceived himself the error he had been guilty of, and to repair it, pretended to acquiesce with my reasons, and to approve of my sentiments: from that moment, I so absolutely despaired of ever being able to recall him to his duty, that I thought mine obliged me to conceal from the king nothing which I believed him capable of doing.

It was always a part of Henry's, character, to be persuaded with difficulty of the treachery of any person about him: he answered that he knew Biron perfectly well, that he was very capable of saying all that was related: but that this man, who, in consequence of his natural violence of temper, the effect of melancholy, was never contented, and exalted himself above every one else, was nevertheless, a moment after, the first to mount his horse, and dare all dangers for those whom he had railed at so much before; therefore he well deserved some indulgence for a little intemperance of tongue: that he was assured Biron would never be induced to rebel against him: that if this should happen, as he had already given a proof on those occasions where he had saved the marshal's life, and in the last place at Fontaine-Françoise, that he did not yield to him in courage, he knew likewise how to shew him that he did not fear him. The king therefore made no alteration in his behaviour to Biron, except that he gave him still greater demonstrations of kindness, and loaded him with new honours, which he looked upon as the only remedy for his defection. He was sent ambassador extraordinary to queen Elizabeth,* from whom the king knew he would rather receive instructions how to act well, than hear persuasions to induce him to fail in his duty, which was really the case; for the marshal, during his stay, at the court of London having, in a conversation with the queen, purposely introduced the subject of the earl of Essex, by lamenting that, after having served her majesty so faithfully, that nobleman had made so tragical an end, Elizabeth answered him in very gentle terms, and spoke to him as if she had known something of the plots which the marshal was engaged in, magnifying the power and rights of kings and princes, appointed by God, and the duties of subjects, who were bound by the laws of Heaven, their conscience, honour, and virtue, to love, revere, and serve them respectfully and loyally, as well from the above reasons as from that prudence which forbids men in high stations embarking voluntarily in schemes replete with danger and insurmountable difficulties, as, she wished him to understand, the earl of Essex had done, without reflecting on the inadequacy of the means he possessed to execute what he had purposed; and when he discovered his mistake, she continued, he would not act with the prudence necessary to make her forget what had passed, but adding audacity and rage to presumption and temerity, he had rejected all the expedients offered him, to extricate himself from his difficulties, he having been informed by many of his friends that a confession of his errors, and a sincere repentance would obtain for him all the pardon he could wish for, and an entire oblivion of whatever had taken place.*

---

* A particular account of this embassy, may be seen in Matthieu, tom II. l. 2. p. 426, and seq.

---

* Mezerai and other French writers, assert that Elizabeth shewed Biron the brains of the earl of Essex in her private chapel, or as others say, fastened to a post or stake, which Cambden well observes "is most ridiculous, for his brains and body were truly buried together." For the rest, the relation of the conversation in

At his return from London, the king appointed Biron likewise ambassador extraordinary to Switzerland, to renew the treaty of alliance between France and the Cantons, still continuing to believe, that an employment which would take off his thoughts from arms, and engage him in a commerce with a body so wise and politic as the Helvetic Senate would subdue at length all inclinations to sedition: but ambition, envy, and avarice, are passions that can never be wholy subdued; and had the heart of Biron been thoroughly sounded, it might probably have been found tainted with all the three. No sooner was he returned from his second embassy, than, as if he had endeavoured to make amends for the time he had lost, he laboured more assiduously than before to bring all his chimerical schemes to perfection; either being persuaded thereto by the duke of Bouillon and the count of Auvergne, who had likewise formed their party, or having drawn them into his.

To strengthen their mutual engagements, these three noblemen signed a form of association, of which each kept an original: in this extraordinary document, which was produced in the process against marshal Biron, they reciprocally promised, upon the

---

the text is confirmed by Cambden: "in the course of her conversa-"tion with Biron" he says, "the queen very sharply blamed the "earl of Essex for his ingratitude towards her, his unadvised con-"sultations, and scornful contumacy, in not begging pardon for his "offence: and she wished that the Christian king of France would "rather use towards his subjects a mild severity than a dissolute "clemency, and that he also would in time cut off the heads of those "who plotted against the state. This advice of the queen might have "well frighted marshal Biron from his wicked designs, but the force "of his destiny so besotted his blind understanding, that, within a "few months after, he suffered the same punishment as the earl of "Essex had lately done." Edit.

faith and word of gentlemen and men of honour, to continue united for their common safety, *to and against all, without any exception* (these terms deserve particular observation); to keep inviolably secret whatever might be revealed to any one of them; and to burn this writing, in case any accident should happen to either of the associates. There was no prospect of succeeding in their designs, but through the co-operation of Spain and Savoy; they therefore renewed their correspondence with these two powers, and on their side, to second their endeavours, went about picking up all the disaffected persons they could find amongst the gentry and soldiers. To draw into rebellion many of the towns at the greatest distance from Paris, particularly those in the provinces of Guienne and Poictou, they took advantage of the sedition occasioned by the establishment of the penny in the livre, which I had opposed so warmly in the assembly *des Notables*, but which I had not afterwards the power to suppress; however, it could not possibly be raised according to the original plan: it had been changed into a subsidy of eight hundred thousand franks, of which one half was sunk in the taille, and the other in the customs.

Biron and his associates, to encrease the discontent of these people, already strongly incited by this impost, persuaded them, that, to complete their calamities, they would shortly be burthened with a duty upon salt; and many persons were kept in their pay in each of these provinces, to terrify the inhabitants with perpetual alarms. What government can expect to be free from these disturbers of public tranquillity, if that of Henry the Great, so wise, mild, and popular, was not? This evil, however, took its rise in the unhappy influence the civil wars had had on the manners of the people; that was the poison which produced those turbulent spirits to whom quiet was painful, and the happiest condition, a languid inactivity; hence arises that restless ambition, which keeps their reason enslaved, makes them murmur against heaven, and quarrel with mankind for torments they bring on themselves; and raises their malice against princes, whose whole power, so obnoxious to them, is not sufficient to gratify their inordinate desires.

Henry's eyes were at length opened with regard to the real character of Biron, which he had hitherto flattered himself he knew so well, and he began to fear he should be obliged to have recourse to the most violent remedy to stop the contagion; informations multiplied every day, and came from persons who could not be suspected; all agreed in the chief point of the conspiracy; some mentioned the act of association, and, having seen it, related the very terms in which it was conceived. Calveyrac* gave the king the most circumstantial and most probable account that had been yet transmitted to him: besides the public rumour, he informed him, that Biron and his colleagues had received several thousand pistoles from persons who came from Spain; that they expected sums still greater, and a supply of forces; that the council of Madrid had agreed to it, on condition that the rebels should begin by seizing some strong maritime places, on the frontiers of Spain; that, conformably to this plan, enterprizes were already formed upon Blaye, Bayonne, Narbonne, Marseilles, and Toulon; and that the count of Auvergne was to wait only till these were executed, to begin openly his attempt upon Saint-Flour.

---

* John de Sudrie, baron de Calveyrac.

All these informations made it absolutely necessary to examine the matter thoroughly. The king came on purpose to the Arsenal, (where he found me busy in completing the labour I had begun,) to communicate to me what he had learned, of which he gave me the detail, leaning upon the balcony over the great walk: he went afterwards to Fontainebleau, whither I followed him; and it was in this place that we were to proceed to the last extremities with marshal Biron. He had for a long time made use of La-Fin * to carry on his foreign negociations, a lively, cunning, intriguing fellow, whom Bouillon and he often called their kinsman. La-Fin had been sent several times to the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, and the count of Fuentes; but afterwards, upon some disgust Biron had given him, he retired to his house, where he remained unemployed. It was not thought impossible to gain him: and for this purpose his nephew, the vidame de Chartres,† was employed who endeavoured to prevail upon his uncle to come to Fontainebleau. In the mean time

---

* James de La-Fin, a gentleman of Burgundy, of the house of Beauvais-la Nocle; "the most dangerous man," says Perefixe, and "the greatest traitor in France; the king knew him well, and "often said to the marshal, 'Don't suffer that man to come near "you; he's a rogue, he'll be the death of you.' He endeavoured "to accuse the marshal de Biron, from a jealousy he entertained, "that the baron de Lux had supplanted him in the marshal's favour; "and in revenge to the count de Fuentes, upon the discovery of "his attempting to betray the latter, for that he had caused his "secretary to be arrested: yet, that he might the better destroy the "marshal de Biron, he pretended still to have the same attachment "to him as before."

† Pregent de La-Fin, vidame de Chartres.

I returned to Paris, to make preparations for a journey his majesty thought it necessary to take immediately into all those places through which Biron had passed, namely, Poictou, Guienne, Limosin, and especially about Blois.

La-Fin having at length resolved to come to Fontainebleau, revealed all that he knew concerning Biron's conspiracy. The king was desirous that he should be detained and lodged at Mi-Voie, that he might be seen by none but those who were sent to confer with him. His majesty judging by what he had first declared, that my presence would be necessary, wrote these few words to me: "My friend, "come to me immediately, on an affair that concerns my service, your honour, and our mutual "satisfaction. Adieu, my dear friend." I took post immediately, and on my arrival at Fontainebleau, I met his majesty in the midst of the large avenue to the castle, ready to go to hunt. I threw myself at his feet: "My friend," said he, to me, pressing me in his arms, "all is discovered; the chief negociator "is come to ask pardon, and to make a full confession: in his accusation he includes a great "number of persons of high rank, some of whom "have particular reasons to love me; but he is a "great liar,* and I am determined to believe nothing "he says without good proofs: he accuses one man, "amongst the rest, whom you little think of; come

---

* We may, doubtless, rank among the number of these, the charge which La-Fin brought against Biron, of his having attempted the king's life, and the Dauphin's, according to Chron. Septennaire, since his friends made use of the proofs they had of the contrary, to obtain his pardon: "Sire, we have at least this advantage," said M. de La-Force to Henry IV. throwing himself at his feet, "that there "is nothing proved as to his having made any attempt on your "majesty's person." Vol. 9129 of the MSS. in the king's library.

" guess who this traitor is." " That is not in my " power, sire," I replied. After pressing me some time longer, but to no purpose, " You know him " well, said he ; it is M. de Rosny." " If the others " are no more guilty than I am," replied I, smiling, " your majesty need not give yourself much trouble " about them." " I believe so," said the king ; " and to shew you you that I do, I have ordered " Bellievre and Villeroi to bring you all the accusations against you and the others ; I have even told " La-Fin, that I would have him see you, and speak " to you freely : he is concealed at Mi-Voie, and " will meet you on the road from Moret ; appoint the " hour and place, and none shall be present at your " conference."

I could not imagine how my name happened to be found in this wicked cabal ; whether it came from some of Biron's people, who supposed me to be a friend of their master, or from Biron himself and his associates, who thought it was lawful for them to make use of it to the Spanish ministers, to swell the number of their partisans ; or of the malecontents of the kingdom : it was not impossible, that two letters I wrote to the marshal, through zeal rather than complaisance, might have involved me in the number of these conspirators ; and the rather because, in allusion to the conversation that passed between Biron and me, which I have formerly mentioned, I told him plainly, that there was nothing to hinder him from making himself useful and dear to the kingdom, by those measures I had marked out to him : I likewise told him, that although I was almost always about the king's person, yet I had never heard him express any resentment against him : and I advised Biron not to assert such a thing publicly, because the world would not fail to believe, and to report, that he only feigned to have received some disgust from his majesty, because his own conscience reproached him with having deserved it. Thus what I said with an intention to bring Biron back to his duty, was interpreted to my disadvantage.

Henry's opinion, as he has since told me, was, that this accusation of me did not take its rise either from Biron or any of his associates, but from La-Fin alone, at the instigation of some persons who hoped by that means to accomplish my disgrace: however that may be, it made so little impression on the king's mind, that his majesty, who had lately given me the government of the Bastile, and intended that the patent for it should not appear in my name, but only in that of la Chevalerie, altered his opinion on this occasion, and caused it to be expedited under mine, knowing none, he said, but me, by whom he could expect to be served with fidelity, in case he should have birds in the cage. Accordingly, Villeroi was ordered to bring me the patent a few days after, which was the beginning of the folling year.

I had a long conversation* with La-Fin alone, in the Forest; after which, Bellievre, Villeroi, and myself, examined, with great care, all the papers that contained any proofs against the duke of Bouillon, marshal Biron, and the count of Auvergne; such as letters, memorandums, and other writings of the same kind. The names of many persons besides these three gentlemen were mentioned in them; but as it was probably with as little justice as mine own, which was there likewise, I shall not, on so slight a foundation, give them a place in these Memoirs, which, to distrustful persons, might make them still more liable to suspicion, than the depositions of La-Fin. After this examination we returned to his majesty, and a council being held, the result of it was, to keep every thing secret, that Biron might not be warned of the measures that were to be taken to bring him to court, that he might be arrested with the greater security. It was likewise resolved, that his majesty should set out immedi-diately on the journey before mentioned. The memoirs of the following year will shew what these measures produced.

---

* Matthieu, vol. II. b. iii. p. 482.

I shall here take some notice of what happened this year in the several states of Europe: the court of London was somewhat alarmed by a rebellion that was stirred up by the Spaniards in Ireland: Elizabeth sent to besiege Kinsale,* the strongest place that the rebels were in possession of; the earl of Tyrone, their leader, and Don Alonzo del Campo, who commanded the Spanish troops in Ireland, hastened to relieve it with all the forces they could get together, which were cut in pieces by the lord Percy. Alonzo remained prisoner there, and Kinsale surrendered.

---

* Owing to contrary winds, the Spanish fleet could not reach Cork, its destination, and therefore entered the harbour of Kinsale towards the end of September, where a body of troops were landed, sir Richard Percy, the governor, retiring with his small garrison to Cork. The Spaniards, as usual, made religion a pretext for this invasion, by spreading various proclamations amongst the people, in one of which Elizabeth was said to be "deposed by the judgment "of the pope; that her subjects were freed from their allegiance, "and that the Spaniards were come to deliver them from the *jaws* "*of the devil!*" However, through the vigilance and promptitude of sir George Carew and lord Mountjoy, all their schemes were frustrated. Our author is wrong in saying the enemy was routed by lord (i. e. sir Richard) Percy: the English forces were commanded by lord Mountjoy. See Camden. Edit.

Very different reports have been raised concerning the destination of the fleet which was fitted out about this time by the king of Spain; but nothing could be certainly known about it; for after it had cruised some time in the Mediterranean, it was attacked by a tempest, and obliged to re-enter the port of Barcelona, in a very shattered condition, without having performed any thing of importance: the command of this fleet had been given to prince Doria. The true or false Don Sebastian still continued to have a great number of partisans in Portugal:* his speeches, certain secrets which he revealed, that, it seemed, could have been only known to the king of Portugal; certain natural marks upon his body, which he shewed, and some other circumstances of the same kind, in which he resembled Don Sebastian, confirmed his assertions. However, to confess the truth, none of these proofs appeared unanswerable; nevertheless, the king of Spain thought it the wisest way to rid himself privately of this pretended prince: so that the truth was never known, or at least to a few persons only, whose interest it was not to publish it.

---

* There is certainly something very surprising and uncommon in this perfect resemblance of all the parts, features, and even the defects of the body, which, according to all the historians, was between the real Don Sebastian and this man, who is said to have been a native of Calabria; and it is no less difficult to guess, how he could come to the knowledge of the circumstances of this king's life, which were so particular and secret as to astonish every one. The Portuguese, still more deceived through their natural affection for the blood of their kings, as also through their hatred for Spain (this last motive might likewise be applied to M. de Sully), than from any evidence they had, persisted in supporting the claims of this impostor. The Septennaire is very favourable to him, an. 1601. p. 217. See what has been said a little higher. The Spaniards were so thoroughly convinced of their having discovered the cheat, when Ferdinand, grand duke of Tuscany, had delivered him up into the hands of the viceroy of Naples, that they no longer scrupled to expose him as a public gazing-stock, mounted on an ass; after which they sent him to the galleys. See Matthieu, tom. II. l. iii. p. 451.

A diet was convoked at Ratisbon, with intention to make some composition between the Popish and Protestant religions; but this came to nothing: upon the first question proposed, which was concerning the authority of the Holy Scriptures,* such heat was raised among the disputants, that an accommodation became impracticable. The Papists maintained, that their authority was derived wholly from the consent of the church, that they might add the prerogative of infallibility to the other rights with which they have so liberally, and with so little reason, invested the Pope: the Protestants treated this doctrine with contempt and ridicule.

The war in Transylvania still continued disadvantageous to the Vaivodes, Battory and Michael, who had revolted from the emperor; they were defeated by George Baste, and Clausembourg was taken. The duke of Mercœur signalized himself no less at the head of the imperial troops against the Turks;† he took Albe-Royale in Hungary, a fortress esteemed impregnable; and afterwards drove the Turks from it, who had returned to besiege it. The archduke,‡ less fortunate than Mercœur, was beaten before Canise; and the knights of Malta took and destroyed the city of Passava in the Morea.

---

* This question was publicly debated, during several sittings, between the Catholic divines of Maximilian duke of Bavaria, and the Protestant divines of Ludovic count Palatine of Neubourg, and of the electors of Saxony and Brandenbourg; the two first of these princes assisted at it in person, and were obliged to put an end to this dispute, the advantage in which, each of the parties, as is always the case, afterwards ascribed to themselves. De Thou, Chron. Septen. for the year 1601.

† The duke of Mercœur, by his great exploits, acquired the reputation of one of the first warriors of his time. See these, as also the other facts that are here spoken of, in the historians.

‡ Ferdinand of Austria.

Constantinople, and the palace of the Grand Signor, was in no less commotion, through the discontent of the janizaries, who proceeded so far as to strangle, in the presence of Mahomet III. seven of the favourites of his seraglio, and even threatened to depose him: he was a man, indeed, whose vices rendered him unworthy of a throne; he was cruel, treacherous, slothful, avaritious, and sunk in every kind of voluptuousness.

BOOK XIII.

1602.

I. Foreign princes at Paris. Henry IV. goes to Blois: occasion of his journey. Farther account of marshal Biron's conspiracy: a council held at Blois upon this occasion. A design formed to arrest the dukes d'Epernon and Bouillon: the first clears his conduct; the great art and address of the second. Quarrel between the king and queen: Henry's conversation with Rosny upon this subject. The effects of Henry's journey into the provinces: he resolves to have Biron arrested: particulars of his and the count d'Auvergne's imprisonment: and of Biron's trial and execution: Rosny's behaviour throughout this affair. Henry pardons the baron de Lux, and the count d'Auvergne, who again betrays him; reasons why he behaved thus to count d'Auvergne. The prince of Joinville arrested: the king pardons him also; but he is confined in prison. The duke of Bouillon artfully avoids coming to court. The courtiers endeavour to raise suspicions in Henry against Rosny: curious conversations betwixt them on this occasion.—II. Affair of the advocates: discourse of Sigogne. Edicts and regulations upon the coin, commerce, finances, &c. Mines discovered in France. Edict against duels. The alliance with the Swiss renewed. Journey of Henry to Calais. Account of the military exploits between the Spaniards and Dutch; and other foreign affairs.

I. Agitated as the minds of the people were, by all those domestic disturbances mentioned in the preceding book, yet it did not hinder them from resigning themselves, this winter, to their accustomed pleasures and shows. By the queen's order, and for her amusement, a magnificent interlude was composed: the Arsenal was the place the king chose for the representation of these shows, on account of the conveniency its spacious apartments afforded, both for the actors and spectators. At the time that this interlude was to be played, the wound I had received in my mouth during the siege of

Chartres[*] happening to open again. I was not in a condition to give the necessary orders at the Arsenal, and they had already pitched upon another place for its representation; but the king chose rather to wait till I was cured, which retarded it eight days.

Towards the middle of Lent, the count of Schomberg, grand marshal of the empire, and envoy from the court of Vienna, arrived at Paris, into which he made his entry with a train of forty or fifty horse: the king ordered the same honours to be paid him that the marshal de Bois-Dauphin[*] had received at Vienna. The prince, son to the marquis of Brandenbourg, staid likewise some time at Paris. It was not usual to defray the expenses of persons of his rank, especially, as was observed by his majesty, if they did not follow the court: but the king was resolved to shew a particular respect to a prince, whose family, one of the most illustrious in Germany, had always professed a remarkable attachment for France; and I was ordered to send him every day, in his majesty's name, presents of the richest wines, and provisions for his table.

When every thing was ready for the king's departure for Blois, and that his majesty, in the several journeys he had made to Paris, had given all the necessary orders for securing peace and tranquillity in that city, and in the provinces he was going to remove from, as well as in those through which he was to pass, he left Paris on the twentieth of May, and came to Fontainebleau, from whence he took the road to Blois. The queen and all her household accompanied his majesty in his journey; I likewise attended him, but did not set out till a few days after: the king sent me notice of his arrival at Blois, and his intention of staying there eight or ten days. This delay was no more than necessary for a regimen that was prescribed him by his physicians, to cure a defluxion of humours which had fallen on one of his legs, and which, for the time it lasted, as Henry wrote to me, might well be called the gout. Blois was, moreover the most proper city he could choose to discover the secret practices of marshal Biron: the king had many persons in this province in whom he could confide, who applied themselves solely to the making these discoveries, and almost every hour sent couriers to him with the intelligence they had procured; by them the king was informed that Biron's cabal extended to Anjou, the higher Poitou, Xaintonge, Mirebalais, Châtelleraudois, Angoumois, Perigord, Limosin, Marche, and Auvergne, and even took in the higher Guyenne, and Languedoc; that it was supported by four or five noblemen of the court, whose names were not expressed, for fear of advancing any thing that was yet doubtful: the connexions with Spain, the schemes for surprising the frontier cities, and the arguments they made use of to disgust the people with the present government (the same which I have already mentioned) made up part of these advices, to which the following new informations were added.

---

[*] See vol. I. p. 247.

[†] Urban de Laval, marquis de Sablé, who died in 1629.

The seditious, to prepossess the people with unfavourable thoughts of his majesty's journey to Blois, which was doubtless a source of uneasy apprehensions to them, gave out every where that Henry had only undertaken it with a design to chastise severely those that had resisted Jambeville, d'Amours, and the other commissioners who had been sent to exact the penny in the livre, upon the rivers and other places of passage, and to settle it himself, in such a manner, that, by a new regulation of the rates, it should produce thrice as much, and to force the duty on salt to be everywhere received by taking possession of the salt-pits, for which the proprietors were to have no other recompense than some rents ill paid from the town-house of Paris; and, lastly, to stop the murmurs which it was expected the exacting of two-tenths would raise (which, they made them believe, Henry had obtained the pope's permission to levy), and the revocation of the draw-backs granted on the taxes of 1594, 1595, and 1596, which I have already mentioned in the account of my journey into the several districts.

Thus was this good prince represented, throughout his whole kingdom, as a furious and implacable tyrant. They were never without one set of arguments to engage the Catholic nobility in a rebellion against him, and another to sow sedition amongst the Protestant officers and gentry: to the first they represented, that this treasure and the formidable artillery, which the king was providing, were to be employed in depriving them totally of their privileges, and reducing them to a state of slavery; they persuaded the second, that the persecution against them was already begun, that the payment of their garrisons, the funds for the preservation of their cities, the pensions of their leaders, their officers, and ministers, would be lessened this year by one-third, and the next by two, after which there would be so much the less difficulty in depriving them of all their fortresses, as it was a point already agreed upon by the council, to exclude the Protestants from all public offices and employments, by refusing to expedite the patents for them.

If the proofs against the persons of the conspirators had been as clear as those of their plots, the king might have that instant given free course to his justice; but, with regard to the dukes of Bouillon and Tremouille, for example, there was as yet less certainty of their guilt, than of marshal Biron and the count of Auvergne's; for at the most there were only suspicions, though those indeed were very strong against them: the other lords of the court, whose names, to the number of eight, were found in the list, might be well ranged under a third class of persons, whose doubtful conduct required some explanation. The dukes of Bouillon and d'Epernon attended the king in his journey to Blois, and his majesty was of opinion he might be able to draw from themselves a proof of their real sentiments, by attentively observing the air and turn of their countenance, during the recital he made them of the news he received: he began first with d'Epernon. A just regard to truth has so often reduced me to the necessity of speaking disadvantageously of this nobleman, that it is with a real satisfaction I seize this opportunity of shewing his innocence, and giving him the praise he deserves. D'Epernon hearing whispers about the court of intrigues and cabals, easily apprehended that, as it is usual to judge of the present by the past, his name would not fail to be mentioned amongst those who were called enemies to the state; for which reason he took the precaution to renew to his majesty at Fontainebleau his assurances of fidelity: these assurances were all the proofs he had to offer, and, unfortunately, Henry, who had been long prejudiced against him, did not give much credit to them: notwithstanding this step, he still continued to suspect him, and because d'Epernon, in speaking to him, had referred to me, the king wrote to me at

Paris an account of what had passed between him and the duke, letting me know, at the same time, that d'Epernon seemed to have an intention to make up matters with me, and he therefore ordered me to make the first advances to him, to the end that, if the crime with which he was charged should appear to be yet only intentional, his majesty might not have any cause to reproach himself with having suffered the duke to rush into actual treason, when there needed only good advice and kind treatment to prevent him.

I obeyed the king's orders, and from that moment became convinced of the duke d'Epernon's innocence: he said the same things to the king at Blois as he had done to me, and did not deny his having heard of some commotions and secret intrigues, but said that these were always so general, and sometimes so full of contradiction, that he could not imagine that any credit was to be given to them; that those who were said to be the authors or favourers of these plots having never given him the least intimation of them, he had treated as a fiction a project which appeared to him wholly extravagant, the present situation of affairs rendering the execution of it absolutely impossible; but whether real or not, he offered the king to continue about his person, as a security for his own fidelity during six months; and if that time was not sufficient, he swore to him that he would not quit him till his suspicions were entirely removed. The king could have no objection to so reasonable a proposition, and began, as well as I, to believe that the duke d'Epernon was guiltless.

The duke of Bouillon discovered far less sincerity: on the first mention his majesty made of the plot to him, he treated it as a calumny invented by spies and informers, against the nobility of the kingdom, to exaggerate their own services, and to appear at least to earn the money that was given them for exercising this employment: to this reproach, which tacitly attacked his majesty, he added an application of a passage in the New Testament, *It is impossible but that offences will come, but woe unto him through whom they come;* a passage, which, if taken in its true sense, might have been with more justice applied to Bouillon and his adherents. Bouillon did not stop here; he added, that it was true he was told that the Catholics, as well as the Protestants, complained of their being oppressed with imposts, and that in proportion as the king's riches and happiness increased, they became poor and miserable; that, besides these general complaints, he had in a certain place, heard Protestants say, that sooner or later it would be their destiny to be looked upon as the plague and nuisance of the state, that both they and their children would be hated, persecuted, and proscribed, that they would be excluded from all honours and employments, and that the kingdom would never be considered quiet till they should be totally extirpated: he added, that the more credit was given to these reports, because that persons of the greatest abilities in the kingdom not being admitted to the council, nor consulted on affairs relating either to the difference of religions, or to the new imposts that were established, they could not inform the people of the true motive of those resolutions which were taken there, nor could the people attribute them to any thing but to a design to enslave them.

It was sufficiently plain that the duke of Bouillon, by talking in this manner, sought to insinuate to the king, that all these reports of a rebellion had no other foundation than the cries of the people oppressed with a multitude of taxes; and that this seeming discontent was put on to conceal from his majesty his real sentiments: but the insolence and the severity of his expressions shewed plainly enough that he could not resist this opportunity of discharging some part of his malice; he even added, with the same subtilty, and with equal chagrin, that they had endeavoured to persuade himself, that his majesty intended to abolish the privileges of his viscounty of Turenne, and to purchase the rights and claims of the house of Mark upon Sedan; but to this, as well as to every thing else, he said, he had only replied, that he was persuaded the king would never act in such a manner, on account of the services he had at all times received from the Protestants; and he concluded by protesting to his majesty, that, although all that had been told him concerning the seditious and traitorous attempts in the kingdom should be as true as he believed them false, yet it should never lessen his duty and fidelity.

The king, dissembling to the duke of Bouillon the opinion he conceived of him from this discourse, made him a proposal of the same nature with that which the duke d'Epernon had of himself so frankly made, and which he expected would throw him into great confusion: he told the duke, that he was satisfied with this assurance, and that he would no longer cherish any remainder of distrust of him, provided he would give the same satisfaction that Epernon had offered, which was not to remove from the court while this affair continued in agitation; and that he might depend upon it he would not keep him about his person without communicating to him all his designs, and calling him to his councils, as he seemed to desire, that he might be himself a witness of his solicitude to relieve the people, and be able to give both the Protestants and Catholics an incontestable proof of the purity of his intentions. Bouillon preserved an uncommon presence of mind under this blow; he broke out into an exclamation of joy and surprise at the sentiments his majesty discovered for him; and as to the proposal he made him, he told him that he would go and put himself in a condition to satisfy it, not for six months only, but for his whole life if necessary, by taking a journey throughout all his estates, that nothing might afterwards interrupt the long stay he intended to make at court. In this manner, by appearing to do all that his majesty required, he reserved, nevertheless, the power of doing only what he pleased himself, and of making a plausible excuse for the sudden departure he was meditating. Henry, comprehending his design, resolved to call a secret council to deliberate upon the measures that were necessary to be taken in this conjuncture. The count of Soissons, the chancellor, Villeroi, Maisse, and myself, were the only persons present at this council: all other affairs were postponed till Descures* was heard, who had been sent by his majesty to invite marshal Biron to court, and whose report was such, that it was unanimously resolved to arrest the marshal and the count of Auvergne as soon as they arrived. The king afterwards asked if it would not be proper to do the like with the dukes of Bouillon and Epernon, before they left the court: almost all the counsellors were of this opinion, and the most distinguished amongst them qualified it no otherwise, than by saying that

---

* Peter Fougeu, lord of Descures.

Biron was the only one to whom mercy might be afterwards extended, because that doing nothing by himself he would easily be reduced to reason, when he was separated from those who hurried him on to his ruin. I took particular notice of this advice upon account of its singularity: mine, however, was directly opposite; I could not approve of the arresting of d'Epernon, nor even of Bouillon: if in such cases suspicions were to serve for proofs, it was likewise necessary, I said, to arrest all whom La-Fin had accused, and myself the first; that in case they should afterwards be found innocent, they would, by this precipitate action, lose an opportunity of seizing Biron and Auvergne, whose treasons were manifest, since it would be impossible to arrest them all at the same time, and their flight would put it out of our power to prove any thing against the prisoners. The arresting of Bouillon and d'Epernon, I added, would have this farther ill consequence, that, whether guilty or innocent, his majesty could not avoid treating them as traitors, through a just fear of what their resentment only of such a public outrage might induce them to do against him. The king yielded to this advice, and the council broke up, it being already dinner time. His majesty being desirous of conferring with me alone upon what had been debated in the council, bid me snatch a soldier's dinner, and come back to him before the court filled again.

When I went down into the hall, where I was waited for by a crowd of people who attach themselves to men in power, I saw the duke d'Epernon advancing to meet me, who, with the same air of conscious innocence which I had before observed in him, told me, that such long and secret councils alarmed a great many persons, but he was not of the number, because he had nothing to reproach himself with. I replied, that he had then nothing to fear, the king being more disposed to pardon the guilty, who confessed their crimes, than to punish the innocent on suspicions only: "I "perceive," added I, "many people who are leav"ing the court; but those whose consciences are "clear need not have recourse to that expedient." "I am one of these," added Epernon; "and I am "resolved not to leave the court while these dis"contents continue." "You cannot do better, "sir," replied I; "and I promise you, that, on this "occasion, you shall not lose the merit of having "taken so good a resolution."

When I came home, I ordered the steward of my household not to furnish my table as usual, but to serve me up any thing that was ready. Nicolas* came in just as I was sitting down to table: "Come, "wash immediately," said I, without telling him of the orders I had just given, "and take your place." He was greatly astonished to hear me, after I had drank two glasses, and eaten a hasty morsel, ask for the fruit, and, at the same time, order my horse to be got ready: he, who loved good cheer as well as mirth, was not pleased at this order: "*Pardieu*, "sir," said he, "I am not surprised that you pass "for one of the wisest noblemen in France; I don't "know one who can drink three glasses during the

---

* Simon Nicolas was the king's secretary, "a poet, a facetious "man, and an old offender," says the Journal of Henry IV. "believing in God only for interest, and, for this reason, he became "the more acceptable to company, according to the corrupt man"ners of those wretched times. He died two years after, in the "70th year of his age, expressing himself, in his last illness, with "shocking impiety."

"whole time you are at dinner." "Well, well, "Nicolas," replied I, "do you finish your dinner; "as for me I have business that calls me else- "where."

I related to his majesty what d'Epernon had said to me a little time before. The king agreed with me that the duke had no inducement to engage in an affair that was carried on by persons, whose religion and disposition were different from his, by which, likewise, while he had no advantages to hope for, he run the hazard of being stript of his estates and employments. D'Epernon had judgment enough to know that the scheme of these rebels was likely to be a fatal one. "Not but that, probably, in his "heart," said the king, "he would be glad of these "disorders, that he may become more necessary to "me; but he knows by experience such designs "are often blasted." His majesty charged me to make another effort to prevail upon the dukes of Bouillon and Tremouille to stay at court, but to wait till he went to Poitiers, because he might then receive intelligence that would determine him. I used my utmost endeavours for this purpose, in the presence of messieurs de la Nouë, de Constant, d'Aubigné, and de Préaux, but all were ineffectual.

During their majesties stay at Blois, an affair of a very different nature was in agitation at court, which I am under some perplexity in relating, for it made too much noise to be passed over in silence; yet I am not at liberty to enter into an explanation of it here, lest I should betray the secret confided to me only by the king and queen, whom it personally concerned; the medium therefore which I shall observe, is to recount only so much of it as transpired, and came to the knowledge of the courtiers.

It was reported that the king and queen had some difference between them, which was confirmed by the king's sending Armagnac* for me so early in the morning, that he was still in bed, as well as the queen, and, contrary to their usual custom, each in their several apartments. It was observed that I had been several times backwards and forwards between them, and I had been seen kneeling three or four times before the king and queen, as if I were endeavouring to obtain some great favour of them. As nothing in such cases escapes the inquisitive courtiers, each formed his own conjectures upon these circumstances, as also that with the names of the king and queen, they heard those of the duke and dutchess of Florence, and Mantua, Virgil Ursin, Don John, Bellegrade, Trainel, Vinti, Joannini, Conchini, Leonora, Gondy, Catherine, Selvage, and the marchioness of Verneuil; other persons, they said, were hinted at, under the covert name of the *colour of tan.* They endeavoured to discover something by my wife, having learned that Conchini (who had often business with her, and who publicly paid her the same respect as a servant does his mistress, and often addressed her by that title) had been several times sent by the queen to bring her, and that she passed many whole afternoons shut up with her majesty in her closet, when she was alone, or when only Leonora was with her.

But that which afforded most matter for discourse, was, that, at the time when these disputes ran highest, la Varenne came one morning to acquaint me, that the king waited for me in the new gallery which he had lately caused to be built at Blois, over those that were the length of the garden below; it is that in which there is the odd representation of a hind with a stag's horns. It was observed, that his majesty ordered two Swiss, who understood not a word of French, to be placed centinels at the end of this gallery which was not yet closed up, and that, during two hours and more which we continued together, we seemed to talk with great earnestness and action. They might, notwithstanding the distance, hear some of our words, from which they could draw no information; but it was not the same with those which his majesty spoke when he went out; these they understood, and carefully remembered: "No more need be said of it; I will regulate "my whole conduct by your advice," said the king, "that I may be no longer reproached with following my own will; but remember, that we may "probably both repent it one day, for you cannot "but be affected with any misfortunes that happen "to me. I know the disposition of those persons "who foment our differences, they will be the cause "of great uneasiness to the state: gentleness and "indulgence are laudable qualities, I confess; but "you cannot deny also, that their extremes are "dangerous." It was not difficult for them likewise to distinguish the latter part of my reply to the king: "It was, indeed, a part of prudence; I told him, "to foresee and to prevent bad accidents, but "it was equally necessary to avoid hastening them "by useless precautions." On this they founded their suspicion, that the king had a design to proceed to some violent measures against certain persons of the queen's household,* and who were most in her confidence.

---

* First gentleman of the bed-chamber to the king.

---

* This is speaking very plainly; and as the other Memoirs of that time all agree with this notion, it can scarcely be doubted, that Henry had not only taken a resolution to clear the court of these informers, who exasperated the queen's mind against him, but likewise to make this princess sensible of her indiscretion, by forbearing

From Blois the king came to Poitiers; he afterwards shewed himself in the Limosin and Guienne: his presence produced every where so good an effect, that he found no opposition to his will, not even to the establishment of the penny in the livre:* he might have afterwards continued this impost, and the collecting of it would have met with no difficulty; but, satisfied with the submission of his people, he took that opportunity to change it into a small subsidy, and afterwards to suppress it entirely. The edict of revocation expressed, that his majesty was wholly induced to it by the obedience of his subjects. Henry, pleased with the success of his journey,† returned again to Fontainebleau, whither he was soon followed by marshal Biron. The consternation his party was thrown into by the king's journey, convinced him that his affairs were not so far advanced as he had been willing to believe; this made him take a resolution to go to court, which several other motives contributed to confirm. His treaty with Spain and Savoy was not yet upon such a footing, as could give him hopes

---

to see her, and obliging her to live at a distance from him in one of his palaces, and perhaps by sending her back to Florence. We may see, in the History of the Mother and Son, tom. I. p. 9, that this prince had threatened her both with the one and the other. It is probable that M. de Rosny thought this last course rather too violent, as, in fact, it was, all circumstances considered.

* La Septennaire says, that M. de Rosny was sent for this purpose by his majesty to Rochelle; and that he was commissioned by the Rochellers to make remonstrances to the king, for suppressing the pancarte or tariff of this impost.

† During this journey to Poitiers, says la Septennaire, which lasted near two months, the court seemed melancholy, the king pensive; no councils, no judicial proceedings were held, except at Blois: all which was owing to the public and private disquietudes of Henry, of which mention has already been made.

of having an immediate supply of what troops and money he had occasion for. Too glaring an opposition to the king's will might raise suspicions of his treasonable practices, which hitherto he imagined had escaped notice; nor was it unlikely, as the baron de Lux, his friend and confident, represented to him, that the king, upon his repeated refusals to appear before him, would march directly against him with an army, as against a declared rebel; which would be a fatal blow to the marshal, who was neither in a condition to defend himself, nor to retire into any of his fortresses, which were unprovided with ammunition of every kind, and particularly of artillery.

I had prepared Biron for this stroke, by the precautions I took some months before: I represented to him, that it was necessary all the pieces of cannon in the fortified places of Burgundy should be cast over again, and the powder new beat. The attention with which I applied myself to all the duties of my employment, as master-general, was alone sufficient to have made this proposal pass unsuspected; but that I might not give the least umbrage by it to the marshal, I was the first to offer to supply the deficiencies, by furnishing him with plenty of every thing that was necessary from the arsenal of Lyons, which I had lately filled with great care. I consented that Biron should dispatch some of his soldiers to Lyons, to escort the boats that were to be loaded with pieces of cannon I was to send him, and that he should receive them before he sent away those he already had. He was ignorant that I had taken such measures every where, that the boats from Lyons, which went up the Saone very slowly, were stopped by the way, till those that came from Burgundy had got beyond the places under his jurisdiction; and when both were in my power, my boats proceeded no farther.

Biron did not perceive the artifice I had made use of till it was out of his power to prevent it: he discovered so violent a rage against me, and boasted so publicly he would poniard me, that the king wrote to me never to go out without a good guard. I had likewise, as if without design, posted the light horse upon the passages of the Loin. But all this, which Biron probably believed to be done only to mortify him, could not open his eyes; de Lux and he drew no other inference from the impossibility they were now under of defending themselves, but that it was necessary they should deceive the king, till by foreign assistance they had provided for their security. Descures and Jeannin acted in such a manner with them, as to increase this confidence; and La-Fin had not only given Biron[*] the strongest assurance that he had not betrayed him, but likewise, that he had sought for an interview with the king with no other view than to sound him, and that he had found him very far from guessing the truth: this he again confirmed to him at Fontainebleau, where, as he passed him, he said these words; "Courage, my master, and speak boldly." The council had likewise so earnestly kept the secret, that the court was wholly unacquainted with what was designed against Biron; and d'Epernon hearing of his arrival at Fontainebleau, sent him such offers of service as are usual amongst persons of high rank:[‡] in which, after what had passed at Blois, he was guilty of great imprudence, as he has since confessed himself.

---

[*] Marshal de Biron imagined that he had seen the treaty that was made with Spain flung into the fire; but La-Fin deceived him, by burning, instead of it, a piece of waste paper.

[†] The duke d'Epernon did not deny, that upon this occasion he had performed all the offices of a friend to marshal de Biron: "When

I had taken a tour to Moret when Biron arrived

"he conversed with him upon this affair," says the historian of his life, "he did not do it in ambiguous terms, as others did, but with "great openness and sincerity. He acquainted him with La-Fin's "treachery and shewed him all the proofs of it, and exhorted him to "throw himself upon the king's mercy. This clears the duke "d'Epernon. Du Plessis-Baussonniere, a gentleman of honour, and "very much attached to the duke (it is the same whom he sent to "meet the marshal) was the person employed to use all sorts of "arguments to prevail with him to ask the king's pardon: hence "this gentleman, assured of his own and his patron's innocence, "could never be induced to retire into a foreign country, after that "the king, who was not ignorant of this step, had caused the marshal de Biron to be arrested; in which he did the duke d'Epernon a considerable service. And he afterwards gave him a second "piece of advice, which proved very profitable, and that was, to "confess freely to his majesty all his proceedings with the marshal "Biron, with what views and intentions he had treated with him." The same historian, in this account, throws out some hints, which discover the very bottom of the duke d'Epernon's sentiments, and which, at the same time, serve to shew his character: "The duke "d'Epernon," says he, "and Biron, having gone together to the "Louvre to pay their compliments after dinner, his majesty, being "told beforehand of their coming, placed himself at a window, to "observe, through the glass, their motions and countenance. A "friend of the duke d'Epernon, who was about the king, gave him "notice of this, that he might regulate his behaviour accordingly. "But he acted quite contrary to what he was advised; and being "more and more confirmed in the testimony he received from his "conscience of his innocence, and filled with a just and high indignation to see his fidelity suspected, he walked on with an upright "countenance, and his eyes directed towards the window where he "knew the king leaned. This his majesty took particular notice of, "and made those about him do so too. The king afterwards made "a match at tennis, in which the count de Soissons, with the king, "played against the duke d'Epernon and the marshal." It is at this match that the historians of that time make the duke utter a good saying, telling the marshal, "that he played well, but chose his side "badly." Hist. de la Vie du Duc d'Epernon, an. 1602. p. 205.

at court; the king sent me notice of it in the following note: "My friend, our man is come: he affects "great modesty and reserve; haste hither speedily "that you may advise us what is to be done: Adieu, "my dear friend." I returned immediately, and found the king walking before the pavilion where I lodged, with Praslin,* whom he quitted to come to me. He took my hand, and continuing his walk, told me, that he had in vain endeavoured, by every method he could think of, to extort from Biron a confession of his crime, although he was so little capable of concealing his thoughts, that he read them plainly in his countenance.† His majesty afterwards laid open to me his most secret sentiments with regard to the marshal; he still felt for him all his former tenderness, and beheld him not with resentment, but compassion: ardently he wished, that I would suggest to him the means by which, without incurring any danger, he might avoid treating him as a state criminal: but this was not easy to be done, considering the disposition Biron was known to be of; if it was dangerous to suffer him to escape, when he shewed no signs of repentance, it was no less so to release him upon his word, after letting him know that we had proofs of his treason.

---

* Charles de Choiseul, marquis de Praslin, captain of the first company of guards, died a marshal of France in the year 1626.

† The king, wearied out with his obstinacy, suddenly left him, saying, as he went away, "Well, I must learn the truth elsewhere: "Adieu, baron de Biron.' These words were like lightning before a clap of thunder, which struck him to the ground: the king thereby degrading him from those many high dignities to which he had advanced him. The same day, after supper, the count de Soissons also exhorted him, in the king's name, to own the truth to him; and concluded his remonstrance with this sentence of the wise man, "The anger of kings is the forerunner of death." Peref. ibid. After dinner, says le Septennaire, he came to wait on the king, who was walking in his grand hall, where his majesty, shewing him his statue in relievo triumphing over the vanquished, says to him, "Well, cousin, if the king of Spain had seen me thus, what would he have

The king once more resumed a resolution suggested to him by the natural sweetness of his temper, which was, to endeavour to restore the marshal to a right way of thinking: but as he had not been able to succeed in this attempt himself, he ordered me to undertake it, and promised me to avow all I should say to Biron to engage his submission, provided that I gave him no hint of what La-Fin had said, to prevent the design of arresting him, to which he must have recourse if the marshal persisted in his obstinacy: "If he opens himself freely to you," said the king, "upon the confidence you must "endeavour to inspire him with, of my favourable "intentions towards him, assure him that he may "come to me without fear, and confess all; and if "he disguises no part of the truth, I promise you, "upon my royal word, I will pardon him cheerfully."

I went to the castle to see the marshal, who was in his majesty's chamber, talking to La-Curée at the head of the bed. I had a sufficient number of attendants with me; and the marshal, seeing his people make way at my approach, advanced to salute me, but did it very coldly. I thought I ought to begin, by endeavouring to soften the resentment I knew he entertained against me: "How is this, "sir?" said I, embracing him, "you salute me with "the gravity of a senator, contrary to your usual "custom; you must not be thus reserved; embrace

---

"said?" To which he lightly made answer, "Sir, he would have "feared you but little." All the lords that were present took notice of this presumptuous answer, and the king looking sternly at him, Biron, who observed it, explained his meaning, by adding, "I mean, "sir, that statue, but not this person."

"me a second time, and let us talk freely." When we were seated, and out of the hearing of any person in the room, "Well, sir," said I, in an obliging tone, "what a strange man are you! have you yet "paid your respects to the king? how were you "received by him? what has he said to you? you "know his disposition is frank and open, he likes "others to be sincere with him; I am told you be"haved in a very reserved manner to him, which "was far from being seasonable, nor did it suit with "either his temper or yours: I am your kinsman, "your friend, and your servant; take my counsel, "and you will find it will be useful to you; tell me "freely what you have upon your heart, and de"pend upon it I will procure you satisfaction; be "not apprehensive that I will deceive you." To all this Biron contented himself with replying in a cold and indifferent manner, "I have waited on the "king with all the reverence and respect that I owe "him; I have answered all his questions, which "were only on general matters, nor had I any thing "more to say to him." "Ah! sir," replied I, "it "is not thus that you ought to act with the king: "you know the goodness of his heart, open yours "to him, and declare freely to him, or to me, if you "had rather it should be so, all your grievances, "and I promise that, before night, you shall be sa"tisfied with each other." "I have nothing more "to say either to the king or to you than what I "have already said," returned the marshal; "but, "if his majesty entertains any suspicion of me, or "thinks I have given him any cause of complaint "against me, let him or you acquaint me with the "occasion of these suspicions and disgusts, and I "will give you satisfaction." "The king," said I, in my eagerness to save him, "is offended at your

" coolness, for as to other particulars," I added immediately, " he is quite ignorant: but let your conscience be your judge, and act in the same " manner as if you knew we were informed of your " most secret actions, nay, even of your words and " thoughts; for I protest to you, upon my honour, " this is the most certain way to obtain whatever " you can desire from the king. The method I re" commend to you I always follow myself: if it " ever happens that I commit any little fault, I ac" knowledge and exaggerate it to the king, who " then grants me all I wish: if you will believe me, " and take my counsel, dear marshal," pursued I, " you and I shall govern the court, and be at the " head of affairs." " I am willing to believe you," replied Biron, with the same coldness, " but I have " nothing to accuse myself of; I feel my conscience " perfectly at ease, since the confession I made the " king at Lyons." Although I had probably said but too much already, yet I could not hinder myself from still making him several other solicitations, which he received no better, and soon after withdrew to his own lodgings.

The king entering that moment, I repeated to him all that I had said to Biron, and his answers. " You have gone rather too far," said his majesty to me, " and have said enough to create some sus" picion in him, and even to induce him to fly. Go " into that gallery," he added, after reflecting some moments upon the blindness and obstinacy with which the marshal hurried on to his ruin, " and " wait for me there; I would talk to my wife and " you alone." Accordingly he returned a short time afterwards with the queen, and shutting the door of the gallery, he told us that the double obligation he was under, as a king and father, to watch over the safety and happiness of the state, leaving him no other part to take but that of arresting marshal Biron and the count d'Auvergne, all that now remained was to consider how to do it securely.* His majesty was of opinion, that we should wait till the marshal and the count were retired each to his respective lodgings, and that then soldiers should be sent to invest them. I proposed that they should be amused in the king's closet till the night was far advanced, and that, after the greater part of the courtiers, weary of waiting for his majesty's retiring, should be withdrawn, they should then be seized as they went out of the king's apartment. "I do not "see how this can be done," replied Henry, without having my chamber and closet filled with blood; "for they will not fail to draw their swords and de-"fend themselves, and if this should happen, I had "rather it were in their apartment than in mine." I thought it of most consequence, upon this occasion, to avoid, as much as possible, all noise and confusion; but the king continuing firm in his first proposal, took leave of me, bidding me go home to supper, "and at nine o'clock," said he, "let your "horses be prepared, and you and all your people "be booted, ready to mount and set out when I send "for you."

---

* It would not have been done, if the marshal de Biron had taken advantage of the notice that was given him. A certain person put a letter into his hand, as he was going to wait on the king after supper, in the name of the countess de Roussy, his sister, and, as he inquired what news, upon finding that the bearer made no answer, he doubted something else was the matter, and, after opening the letter he found notice given him, that, if he did not make his retreat in two hours, he would be arrested, and directly shewed it to one of his friends called de Carbonnieres, who said to him, Then, adieu, sir, I wish I had a poniard in my breast, provided you were now safe in Burgundy. To this he made answer, "Suppose I were there, and "that I were to have four in mine, upon receiving the king's orders, I would immediately come hither. Notwithstanding this, he went into the king's chamber, where he played at primero with the queen, and in the midst of his game, the sieur de Merge, a gentleman of Burgundy, was observed to whisper something in his ear, which the marshal not regarding, the count d'Auvergne came also and twice touched him on the side, telling him, "It is not safe for us to be "here." Sept. ibid.

I withdrew to my pavilion, where, after giving orders, conformable to those I had received from his majesty, I went into my closet, from whence I could see all that passed about Biron's apartment, which was in the pavilion opposite to mine. I read and walked about alternately, without neglecting to observe what was doing on that side where I expected soon to see the attack begun, and to receive new orders from the king. The clock struck nine, ten, and eleven, yet nothing was done; at length midnight came, yet all was quiet: I am afraid, said I, returning to my chamber, where all my domestics waited for the scene that was preparing, some at play, sone in conversation, and others asleep; I am afraid, that they have not taken their measures right, and have suffered the birds, which, with so little difficulty, they might have taken, to escape and which will not be easily entrapped again. I then ordered them to saddle my horses, and pack up my baggage, while I went into my closet, and wrote a few words.

I continued there half an hour, after which I heard a noise at the door of my pavilion next the garden, and a voice cry "Sir, the king sends for "you." I looked out at the window, and knew the messenger to be la Varenne, who went on saying, "Sir, come immediately, the king wants to speak "with you, and to send you to Paris, to give the "necessary orders there, for messieurs de Biron and "d'Auvergne are made prisoners." "And where were "they taken?" said I.* "In the king's closet," he replied. "God be praised," said I, "that the "king has followed that advice." I ran directly to his majesty's apartment. "Our men are seized," said he to me; "mount your horse, and go and "prepare their lodgings in the Bastile; I shall send "them in a boat to the gate of the Arsenal next the "river: make them land there, that they may not "be seen, and carry them without any noise through "the midst of your courts and gardens. When you "have made proper dispositions in the Arsenal for "their reception, if you can, before they arrive, "which they will do soon after you, go to the parliament and the town-house, and declare there "what has happened; tell them, that, at my arrival, "they shall know the reasons for this proceeding, "which they will find to be just." All these orders were happily and exactly executed. At the very moment that the prisoners landed at the Arsenal, my wife was brought to bed of that daughter of mine, who bore the title of mademoiselle de Sully.

---

* Vitry arrested the marshal de Biron as he came out of the king's antichamber: "Sir," said he to him, "the king has commanded me "to give him an account of your person; deliver me your sword." "You but jest," replied Biron to him. "Sir," rejoined Vitry, "the king has so commanded me." "Pray," said the marshal again, "let me speak to the king." "No, sir," answered Vitry, "the king "has retired to rest." Parslin waited at the same time for the count d'Auvergne at the gate of the castle, to whom, as he came out, he said, "You are the king's prisoner." "What I, I?" returned the count d'Auvergne, much surprised. "Yes, you, Sir," said Praslin to him, "I arrest you in the king's name, deliver me your sword." "Here, take it," replies the count, "it has never killed any thing "but wild boars; if you had acquainted me sooner of this, I would "have been in bed and asleep two hours ago."

I gave the care of the prisoners to the soldiers of the king's guards, joined to my own, and posted them in such a manner that they might be said to be guards upon each other. I likewise placed a guard upon the bastion, opposite to the windows in the prisoners apartment, and another upon the terrace of the tower; so that, as I wrote to the king, it was impossible they should escape, unless by the interposition of angels. The repeated advices I received from his majesty obliged me to take all these precautions. A few days after the detention of the prisoners, the king wrote to me, that he was informed, there was a scheme laid to procure their escape, ordering me to watch them carefully, for that I should answer for them. I consented to this condition, relying on the fidelity of my soldiers, every one of whom, to make an escape practicable, must have been corrupted. Another time the king sent me notice, that the plot which was formed for delivering Biron and d'Auvergne, was also against my person: a boat full of soldiers was in the night to come up the river, and the men were to land at the steps of a gate behind my apartment which looked upon the river, that they were to force open this gate with a petard, to do the same by the second, and get into my chamber while I was in bed, and carry me to Franche-Comté, fresh horses being in readiness for them at the end of every ten leagues, and that when in possession of my person, they were to deal with me by way of reprisal, as Biron should be dealt with. This last information, although so circumstantial, appeared to me as frivolous as the rest: I thanked his majesty, however, for giving it me. He had the goodness to command me to be strictly attentive to my own safety, assuring me, that if the design which was laid against me should succeed, he would not hesitate a moment to purchase me at the price of freeing the prisoners, and, if there were occasion, by a still greater concession. To satisfy him, I placed a small guard likewise at this gate.

The first president, the president de Blacmesnil,* and the two counsellors de Fleury and de Thurin, were named by the parliament to interrogate the prisoners, whom, for this purpose, I ordered to be carried into a small pavilion, in the midst of the great walk of the Arsenal: as it was necessary likewise that they should be examined in full parliament, I caused a covered boat to be prepared for them, in which they were carried thither, and brought back again without being seen.

The history of this trial, and all the particulars of the event I am now relating, are known to every one, and that marshal Biron seeing Miron, the lieutenant civil, at the foot of the scaffold, gave him a caution against La Fin, took his leave of the elder Rumigny, entreating him to bear his respects to mademoiselle de Rumigny, which he said, was all the present he had to make her, and many circumstances of the like nature. The sudden sallies of rage, the terrors and weaknesses which this man,† who amidst the greatest dangers of war, had acquired the character of intrepid, shewed at his execution, have furnished matter for much discourse, and doubtless will not be forgot by historians: as for me I have nothing new to relate, except, perhaps, some circumstances that regard me personally.

---

* Achilles de Harlay, the first president; Nicholas de Potier sieur de Blancmesnil, president; Stephen de Fleury, dean; Philibert de Thurin, counsellor of the grand chamber.

† These inward agitations had almost deprived him of his senses, and gave great trouble to the assistants, especially to the executioner, who durst not let him see his sword, and who yet took his opportunity so well, by amusing the marshal, that he made his head fly off at one blow, which he gave so dexterously that it was scarcely seen. I cannot forbear mentioning, to the honour of learning, that marshal Biron the father was as remarkable for erudition as the son for ignorance: he could scarcely read. The following account of him from the Chronologie Septennaire, will serve to

While preparations were making for trying the

---

finish his character. The author, after observing that he had almost all the qualities necessary to make a great warrior, namely that he was brave, successful, indefatigable, sober, and temperate, adds, "He was particularly fond of splendor, proud and ostenta-"tious, and even has been often known to despise the pleasures of "the table and live abstemiously, that he might gratify his fantastic "passion for glory; he was daring in battle and immeasurably "ambitious: he was so presumptuous as to believe that neither "the king nor France could do without him; he had also become "so malevolent and slanderous, that he spoke ill of all princes; he "has been often heard to ridicule the mass, and make a jest of the "Protestant religion; there are numberless instances given of his "having but little religion; he relied very much on the predic-"tions of astrologers and divines." The author after this gives an account of an adventure that happened to him as he was going to consult, under a borrowed name, the old astrologer La Brosse, the same of whom M. de Sully speaks so often in his Memoirs: "This "good man," says he, "who was then in a little tower or garret "that served him for a study, said to him, 'Well, my son, I see the "person for whom this horoscope is cast will arrive at great ho-"nours through his diligence and military bravery, and might come "to be a king but there is a *caput algol* that keeps him from it.' "'And what is the meaning of that?' says the baron de Biron. "'Don't ask me the meaning of it,' returns La Brosse. 'No!' "says the baron, 'but I must know.'" After many altercations between them, La Brosse at length said, "'The meaning is this, "my friend, he will do so much that he shall have his head cut off.' "Upon this the baron fell upon him and beat him cruelly, and "afterwards leaving him half-dead, came down from the garret, "taking the key of the door with him." This account is filled with other pretended predictions that were made him, and to which I think no man of sense would have shewn any regard.

two state prisoners, they often desired to speak with me:* two considerations hindered me from giving them this satisfaction; first, because it would be to no purpose to hear the prayers and solicitations of Biron, whose life it was impossible for me to save; and, secondly, having been comprehended myself in La-Fin's depositions, I was not willing to give either weak or malignant persons room to suspect that I had used any endeavours with the prisoners to keep them silent with regard to me, or that I had any occasion to speak to them. It was my design, on the other hand, that, if any supposed me to have had the least connexion with Biron, they should think that, by thus refusing to see him, I should make him resolve to live no longer on terms of civility with a man whom, upon that supposition, he must, for many reasons, regard as a traitor. He reverenced my innocence, and if he spoke of me, as he often did, it was only to praise the counsels I had given him, and to condemn himself for not following them.

---

* Biron requested the sieur de Baranton, M. de Praslin's lieutenant, to wait on M. de Rosny from him, and tell him that he desired to see him; but if that favour could not be obtained, he earnestly begged of him to intercede with the king for his life, a piece of service which he expected from him, as he always had a great esteem for him, and found him to be his friend, and such a friend, that, had he been persuaded by him, he would not have been in the place where he then was; that there were persons more guilty than himself, but that he was the most unfortunate of them all; that he was content to be confined between four bare walls and chained down. The earnest entreaties which the sieur de Baranton made in his name, so greatly affected M. de Rosny and his lady, the sieur Zamet, and others who were present, that they were unable to speak for some time, and sat listening in tears. At length M. de Rosny broke silence and said, "I cannot see him, "nor intercede for him, it is now too late; had he been persuaded by me, he had not been in this melancholy situation, for "he ought to have declared the truth to his majesty from the time "of his arrival at Fontainebleau; and since he did not so, he has "taken from the king the means of giving him his life, and from "all his friends that of interceding for him." Chronologie Septennaire, ann. 1602. See the whole of this affair in the historian Matthieu, tom. II. liv. iii. p. 482 to 534, where an account given of what relates to the duke de Sully is conformable to that in our Memoirs.

Deffunctis, grand-provost of the Isle-de-France, took down in writing all that passed at the execution of marshal Biron, and gave the manuscript to me some time afterwards. By that I learned that Biron, when he came out of the chapel, where he had made his confession to the sieurs Garnier and Maignan, doctors of the Sorbonne, asked if there was no person there belonging to monsieur de Rosny; and being told that the younger Arnaud was there, he called him, and said, "Monsieur "Arnaud, I desire you will carry my last farewell "to monsieur de Rosny, and tell him, that to-"day he loses one of his best friends, and the "most affectionate kinsman and servant he ever "had: I have always highly esteemed his merit "and valued his friendship. Alas!" he continued, after raising his voice, and shedding some tears, which obliged him to keep his face covered with his handkerchief, "had I believed him, I "should have avoided this fate: tell him, I be-"seech you, that I recommend my brothers to him, "particularly my brother Saint Blancard,* who is "his nephew, and that I entreat he will give my "youngest brother some post about the Dauphin,

---

* John de Gontaut, seigneur de Saint Blancard, had married mademoiselle de Saint-Genniés, niece to M. de Sully. The marshal de Biron had no other brothers living; he must therefore comprehend under that name his brothers-in-law.

"and that he would tell them, that, although I "have failed in my duty and obedience, yet that "they ought faithfully to perform theirs, and continue always firm in their attachment to the "king; but that he would not let them come im"mediately to court, lest they should suffer any "reproaches on my account." Another time Biron talking of me, said, "The king has, in monsieur "de Rosny, a faithful servant, and a wise and pru"dent counsellor; his majesty has done well to "make use of him; for while he continues to di"rect his councils, France will be happy, and I "might have been so likewise, had I governed "myself by his advice." On any other occasion I should have avoided inserting, in these Memoirs, such discourses in my praise; but on this I did not think myself at liberty to make the least alteration in the marshal's words. I was ignorant of his having given these public testimonies of his esteem for me, when I joined with the rest of his relations* in imploring a favour for him, a slight one indeed, it was only to change the place destined for his execution; accordingly, instead of the Place de Grève, which was named in his sentence, his majesty permitted the marshal to be beheaded in the court of the Bastile.*

---

* Messieurs de Saint Blancard, de la Force, the count de Roussy, de Chateauneuf, de Thémines, de Salignac, and de Saint Angel went three days after the arrest of marshal de Biron, to throw themselves at the feet of his majesty, who was then at St. Maur des Fossés, but they could obtain no other favour than that which our author speaks of here. Henry comforted them, by reminding them of the example of the constable de Saint Paul, allied to the house of Bourbon, who was beheaded for a similar crime, and the prince of Condé, who would have undergone the same fate had it not been for the death of Francis II. &c. MS. Biblioth. royale, vol. 9129, where likewise may be seen a collection of pieces relating to the marshal de Biron's trial.

---

* It was said at the time that marshal Biron fell a victim to the envy and hatred of the duke of Sully; but, I think, there is sufficient proof in these memoirs that their author did every thing in his power to recal the marshal to a sense of his duty. In Lodge's Illustrations of Brit. Hist. is a French letter written to some person in the English court on the day Biron was executed, which as it contains several interesting particulars, and shows, in some degree, the popular feeling on the occasion, I shall offer no apology for giving a translation of the greater part of it here:

"The chancellor, assisted by the principal counsellors of state, "and the masters of requests, met several days, together with the "parliament, to try the marshal de Biron. On Friday last, whilst "they were sitting, about 8 o'clock, three soldiers stuck a large placard against the principal gate of the palace, the substance of which "was, 'That what they alleged against the marshal was nothing "but calumny, and that the court had better take care how they "dealt with him;' the remainder consisted of his praises. This "placard was carried to the assembly by chevalier le Guet, "which broke up immediately; it met again the next day, being "Saturday the 19th of this month [July, 1602] to hear the marshal, "who was brought in by M. de Montigny. At first he was put to "the bar, but the chancellor not being able to hear him, he was "brought withinside, where a seat was given him. He then made "a long and eloquent speech, on the services of his deceased father "and himself, begging the assembly to consider the difference between him and La-Fin, whom he charged with having urged him "to such an action, and having even betwitched him, and whom, he "added, every one knew to be the most infamous person on earth. "As the marshal would make no confessions, the chancellor told "him, that justice possessed means of compelling those to speak who "showed too much obstinacy," to which he replied, "that justice "ceased to be such, when it wished to draw from people by force "matters which they were ignorant of. On that day the king was "at the Tuilleries, and was very urgent for the conclusion of the "business, which would have taken place, but for M. Fleury, the "judge, who, on account of the lateness of the hour, would not "come to a vote; the marshal was therefore conveyed back to "the Bastile by water, as he had come. On the same evening, "another placard was fixed to the Palace-gate, with these words:

The death of Biron entirely disconcerted all the schemes of the cabal. Lavardin, who had been

---

" 'To-day in order to gratify Rosny, they put Biron to death on the " single evidence of the most infamous traitor in the kingdom, a " murderer, a parricide, a coiner of bad money, a ravisher, and " a sorcerer.' Another very seditious one was thrown into the " Tuilleries.

" Last Monday the court met at five in the morning and sat till " two in the afternoon. When they came to the vote, there was " not one of the counsellors who did not speak at great length on " the marshal's virtues, yet all voted for his execution, by which " the court declared him fully attainted of high treason, in having " made attempts against the person of the king and his state, for " which, after he should be heard and interrogated on certain facts " and articles arising out of the trial, they sentenced him to be led " to the Place de Grève, and there, on a scaffold, to be beheaded, " and his property to be confiscated to the king, or to those to " whom it appertains.

" On the next day (Tuesday), it was expected that he would be " executed; but some of his friends having petitioned the king that " he might not be executed publicly, and the king referring the matter to the court, it was necessary to wait till this morning, when " it assembled, and it has decreed that notwithstanding the sentence " of Monday, the court in mitigation allow that he shall be executed " in the Bastile, whither the first President, accompanied by the " chancellor, immediately repaired: as soon as the marshal saw " them approaching, he said to those about him,—' See! here comes " my death.' The chancellor having asked him for the riband of " the order, he answered—' Take it! I wish I had never seen it;' " and when the president wished to read his sentence he would not " hear him, interrupting him every moment, and bearing it with " great impatience; and as some of the clergy admonished him to " prepare for death, he said—' Be done—do you not see that fellow there, who is waiting for me?' meaning the executioner. " As he mounted the scaffold, he recollected one of his sisters, who " was with child, and taking a ring from his finger, he begged " them to give it to her. He also mentioned a great deal of money " which he had in different places, but he accused no person. When " upon the scaffold, and the executioner approached to make every " thing right, he ordered him not to touch him, lest he should put " him in a rage—' For,' said he, ' I will strangle you all.' His sent at the same time by his majesty into Burgundy, at the head of a body of troops, took possession of all the places there which had been held by the marshal without striking a blow, and sent Senecé to inform the king that this province had submitted. The government of it was given to the Dauphin, to whom M. Le Grand was made lieutenant. The proceedings against the conspirators stopped here: and, except Fontenelles,[*] whom Henry thought it necessary to punish, as an example to others, although he was not one of the principal criminals, he pardoned all the rest. The number of the conspirators was very great, and, upon examination, many of the most considerable courtiers were involved in the guilt.[†] I strengthened as much as possible the king's inclinations to lenity: I forewarned those whom I knew to have had some share in the confidence of Biron, and represented to them so plainly, that all they had now

---

"countenance was very wild, and he often looked round him, "if he could not seize the executioner's sword; he put on his "bandage two or three times, and at the second time he requested "one of his brothers-in-law to console him as much as he could, "and when he was about to take off his bandage again, the executioner struck off his head. His body is to be conveyed to Biron." Lodge's Illustrations, vol. iii. 128, et seqq. Edit.

[*] Guy Eder de Beaumanoir, baron de Fontenelles, was a gentleman of Brittany. He was convicted of having intended to deliver up the fort of Douarnenès to the Spaniards, for which he was drawn upon a sledge, and broke alive in the Place de Grève. "The "king," says M. de Perefixe, "in consideration of his family, which "was very illustrious, granted to his relations that, in the arret, he "should not be called by his own name: but history could not con- "ceal it." M. de Thou, liv. 128, speaks of him as of a fellow, who had been employed in Brittany by the league.

[†] According to Siri, there was something more than mere suspicions against the constable de Montmorency, and even against the duke de Montpensier. Mem. recond. vol. I. p. 103.

to do was to throw themselves at the king's feet, and implore his pardon, that almost all pursued this method: the secrecy which I promised them will not permit me to mention their names here, and, far from having any cause to repent of a step, of which the king and myself only were witnesses, they were soon convinced that his majesty not only took care to shew he had no resentment against them, but likewise appeared to hold them in higher esteem than before.

Herbert, who was secretary to the party, and had been several times sent into Milan, and throughout all Italy by Marshal Biron, was likewise arrested. I was ordered to interrogate him in the presence of the count d'Auvergne, and to receive his depositions, the king having promised him a pardon, upon condition that he sincerely declared all he knew. The principal discovery he made, and that which gave the fullest conviction of the perfidy of Spain, was, that Roncas and Alphonso Cazal had been sent by that court, at different times, with large sums of money to marshal Biron. To convince Herbert that his majesty had no design to deceive him, before I began to examine him, I delivered his pardon signed by the king, into the hands of the count d'Auvergne.

The baron de Lux was not excepted out of the general amnesty; his perplexity, when he heard of the imprisonment of his friend, had been very great, because he found it as dangerous to leave, as to stay in, the kingdom; he was still undetermined what to do, when La Plume came from his majesty with an order to attend him, promising him his pardon, at the same time, if he would endeavour to deserve it by his obedience and repentance. De Lux, sensible of his guilt, was now more alarmed than before; yet he told the messenger that he was ready to obey the king's orders, provided he would assure him that he should not be exposed to the shame of a public examination, nor be confronted with his accusers; that he should be continued in his post,* and permitted to retire from court after his confession; he was afraid of being detained, under pretence that it was either not full enough, or insincere. There being no letter from his majesty, de Lux appeared contented with a promise under my hand that he should receive no harm.

The king having granted all that the baron de Lux demanded, he came to Paris, and meeting his majesty as he was going to hunt, threw himself at his feet, and was beginning a long speech, when the king, who had not then leisure to hear him, stopped him short, by saying, "Go to monsieur de Rosny, "and I will talk to you afterwards." This order, the tone with which de Lux fancied it was given, and the place to which he was sent, raised such apprehensions in his mind, that he was upon the point of making his escape. However, he came to the Arsenal, but under such terrors, that, instead of listening to any thing I said to him, he was continually looking round him, and his apprehensions were encreased when he saw his majesty's guards enter and file off in the court of the Arsenal, the king having sent them thither, because he intended to pass by the Arsenal in his return from the chase. De Lux now thought himself lost. "Ah! sir," said he to me, "I came hither upon the king's word and yours; "do you intend to detain me?" "Why do you ask "me this question, sir?" said I. "The guards," said he, "which I perceive entering in files, per"suade me that it is not the king who is coming, but

---

* He was governor of the castle of Dijon, and the town of Beaune.

“ that they are probably sent for me.” Without giving me time to undeceive him, he entreated me to allow him to speak to the king before he was confined, promising, and I believe very sincerely, to conceal nothing from him. “ I have observed “ your uneasiness,” replied I, “ but be not afraid, I “ have no orders to arrest you ; speak freely to the “ king, swear to be faithful to him, and keep your “ oath, you will then have nothing to apprehend ; “ had the duke of Biron acted in that manner, he “ would have been now alive.” That moment a messenger informed me that the king was returned to the Louvre, and desired to speak with me : the evening was so far advanced before the chase was ended, that, instead of coming to the Arsenal as he had proposed, he went directly to the palace. This message relieved the baron de Lux from his terrors. The next day he had a conference with his majesty, which lasted above four hours ; he gave no cause for accusing him of indiscretion in concealing his accomplices, but named such a prodigious number of persons, that Henry, glad to find in such general accusations a pretence for believing none, and for making himself easy, treated all those whom de Lux accused, and who were continually about him, no less favourably than before. It is certain, however, that many of them were acquainted with marshal Biron’s designs, but the hope of remaining unnoticed amongst the crowd, determined them not to own their connexions with him, notwithstanding all the advances and promises which I made them. The constable had indeed kept up a sort of intimacy with Biron, which in prudence ought to have been avoided ; but, as I was persuaded that it was merely personal, and extended no further, I thought myself obliged to justify him to his majesty, on whom his assurances of fidelity made so little impression, that he could not help regarding him with an eye of suspicion: I may say with truth, that my endeavours did not a little contribute towards restoring him to the king's favour; and this prince had no reason to repent of his clemency, either to him or any of the others,* except only the count d'Auvergne, to whom it is time to return.

The nature of the crime which he, as well as the duke of Biron, had committed, and the equality of the proofs against them, made it highly probable that their punishment would be alike; however, their fates were very different; the king not only gave the count his life, which he caused to be intimated to him by the constable, but also softened, as much as possible, the inconvenience of his imprisonment: he permitted him to agree with the lieutenant of the Bastile for his table, discharged him of the expense of the officers and soldiers appointed for his guard, and reduced them afterwards to five, comprehending the exempt, upon my representations that a greater number was useless. At first, indeed, he was not allowed to walk upon the terraces, but afterwards he was indulged in all his desires; and at length wholly discharged from his confinement.* He had been so little accustomed to be treated as a criminal, that when he was told the king had granted him his life, he said, it signified nothing, unless he gave him his liberty likewise.

---

* It is not certain that Henry the IVth never had reason to repent of this indulgence. As to the assassination of this prince, there remains a great many doubts, the clearing of which becomes more and more difficult: but by supposing what is very likely, namely, that the blow which took off Henry IV. did not proceed from the conspiracy here spoken of, we may still believe that this catastrophe had not happened, if the conspirators had been prosecuted with more severity: in this case it must be allowed, that Henry IV. and M. de Rosny were deceived by their too great lenity, of which the prince became the victim. What the author says four lines higher of those who boldly concealed themselves among the crowd, sufficiently shews, that the spirit of revolt was not extinguished by the death of its head.

Those who praise alike the good or bad actions of kings, will not want arguments to justify Henry in this different treatment of two persons equally guilty; they will allege, as it was then reported at court, that the services his majesty might expect from the count d'Auvergne, in discovering to him the plots of the Spanish party against France, made it necessary to pardon him, for his own interest. For my own part, I am too candid not to confess, that on this occasion, the king gave no proof of his clemency, but of his passion for the marchioness of Verneuil, sister to the count d'Auvergne, which was the sole cause of the indulgence he shewed to the count. However, I concealed my thoughts with great care, and, during two years, never mentioned a word to the king upon the subject, being persuaded, that all the arguments I could use at the time would have no force against the prayers and tears of a mistress; and when the thing was done, it was to no purpose to shew him his error. It was not till after the count d'Auvergne had, by new instances of ingratitude, obliged his benefactor to proceed against him as a criminal, that I just hinted my thoughts of his former conduct, and then I was forced to it by the king himself.

One day, when the king and I were alone, the conversation turned upon this subject; and Henry, after looking at me silently for some time, at length told me, that he had been often greatly surprised at my not asking him his reasons for preserving the count d'Auvergne. I replied, that I had thought it my duty to keep my conjectures on that head to myself, among which there were two that appeared to me to be the most probable, but that I never chose to explain myself to his majesty for fear of offending him. Henry answered immediately, with his usual vivacity, that he could easily guess, that one of the motives to which I attributed the favour he had shewn the prisoner, regarded the marchioness of Verneuil; and assured me, that that alone would never have been sufficient to have induced him to grant him both his life and liberty; but that he was absolutely ignorant of the second, to which I supposed his deliverance had been owing, and pressed me repeatedly to tell him what it was. I confessed to him, that it had been always my opinion, that his majesty would not inflict a shameful death upon a man who would be always considered as the uncle of his children, in case he should have any by the marchioness of Verneuil. Henry swore to me, that he had not carried his reflections so far, although that consideration, if it had occurred to him, would have had great weight with him; and he insisted upon my guessing, in my turn, the true reason that had induced him to set Auvergne at liberty: he again repeated to me, that the solicitations of his mistress, the intreaties of the constable, his three daughters, and of Ventadour, who had all thrown themselves at his feet, had not had so great a share in that resolution as I imagined, they having contented themselves with asking only the life of the prisoner. And at length, after all this winding, he declared to me, that his chief inducement to pardon Auvergne was the great promises he made him, and the air of sincerity with which these promises were accompanied: he then related to me all that had passed between himself and Auvergne, when the latter implored the favour of a conference with him: he told me, that the count, after many assurances of a sincere repentance, and protestations of inviolable fidelity for the future, had promised him, with the most sacred oaths, if he would restore him to liberty, to procure him intelligence of the most secret resolutions that were taken in the councils of Spain; to accomplish which, he had only to resume, in appearance, his former engagements with that court, well knowing how to deceive them, and to make them receive as true, what on his side would be only feigned: but that this dissimulation might not, in Spain, draw upon him the punishment of a traitor, it was necessary that his majesty should not reveal to any of his ministers what he then said, nor take umbrage at his journeys to Spain, nor the packets he should receive from thence.

---

* In the beginning of October. "It was not," says le Septenaire, "without having first made an open confession to messieurs "the chancellor, de Sillery, and Rosny."

The king, after this recital, added, that it was with difficulty he could bring himself to believe the promises Auvergne made him, or suppose that he could debase himself so low, as to take up the trade of a spy, and become a double traitor; but that after the count had assured him he really meant to perform all he had engaged to do, although he hated him more than ever, yet he was determined to wait the effect of his promises, and make use of him to procure such intelligence concerning the proceedings of Spain, as he could obtain by no other means; and in this expectation, he had promised Auvergne secrecy, and the other conditions he had demanded.

The conclusion I came to, upon what the king told me, was, that he was every way deceived by the count d'Auvergne, or rather, I repeat it again, betrayed by his passion for his mistress; this was the fascination that closed his eyes upon the artifice of the count; and after having prevailed upon him to spare his life, snatched from him likewise the grant of his liberty, and that upon so slight a foundation, as does little honour to the prudence of Henry. It is not clear, indeed, whether Auvergne had not then an inclination to keep his word, but, by suffering himself to be seduced a second time, he became once more a traitor to his prince.

It cannot be denied that the count was ingenious, subtle, penetrating, and naturally eloquent; qualities very fit for the part he had undertaken to act: but, not to mention his ambition, his inclination to debauchery, and other dangerous passions, he had in his heart such a fund of malice and perfidiousness, that it was easy to see he would resume his former dispositions; but he resumed them with so much address, that the king did not perceive when it happened, taking it for granted, that it did not happen the very moment he found himself secure. He often conferred with his majesty concerning the king of Spain, and related very bad things of him, the better to play his part; but all he said might be reduced to matters of little consequence; while to the court of Spain he gave very exact and very material informations of every thing that passed in France. I shall return to him again in another place.

The prince of Joinville,* to whom Henry likewise extended his clemency, was a young man of a different character; nothing could be more light, more whimsical, and more unsteady; he had engaged himself with bad company, among whom, to be in the fashion, and to appear a man of consequence, it was necessary that he should have correspondences without the kingdom; this was sufficient to ruin him entirely. His majesty being informed that he carried on his intrigues with Spain by the count of Chamnite, governor of Franche-Comté for the king of Spain, and one of his ministers, he ordered him to be arrested: as soon as he found himself in custody, he, like all the others, declared that he was ready to make a full confession, provided it was to the king in person, and that I should be present. I had left Paris in the evening, to visit my new acquisition of Sully, and to trace out the plan of some buildings there, to render it more habitable than it was at present. I was just arrived, and preparing to sit down to supper, when I heard his majesty's postilion blow his horn, and immediately suspected my stay at Sully would not be long. He gave me a note from the king, which contained only an order to come to him, without explaining himself any farther. Believing the business to be of the utmost importance, I set out so early the next morning, that I only saw Sully by the light of the flambeaux. When I was made acquainted with the affair, I thought it my duty to intercede for an inexperienced youth, who was drawn into errors by his rashness and folly. Joinville being brought before us, confessed all he was desired to do. The king entering immediately into his character, treated him as he deserved; he sent for his mother, the dutchess of Guise, and the duke, his brother, and taking them into his closet, "Here," said he, "is the prodigal son himself, I shall use "him like a child, and pardon him for yours and "monsieur de Rosny's sake, who has interceded for "him; but I do it upon condition that you will "all three reprove him severely, and that you, "nephew," he added, turning to the duke of Guise, "will answer for his conduct for the future: I deliver him up to your care, make him wise, if it be "possible." This change was not so easy a thing to effect on a young man of lively passions, incapable of instruction, and whose disposition had already taken its bent: he was suffered to remain in prison for some months, where at first he was obstinately sullen, then insolent and furious, and at last, through mere weariness, promised to behave well, if he were taken from thence. The king consented to his removal, and he was told that he might go and live in the castle of Dampierre. Joinville was not much better pleased with this place than his prison, and represented to the king, that he could not reside in a castle which was not furnished. Unfortunately for him, the king knew this to be a falsehood: for having often hunted near that castle and Chevreuse, which is but at a small distance from it, the keeper of these two places had offered to accommodate him with apartments and beds there; and he had been told by the dutchess of Guise, that Dampierre was as well furnished as Chevreuse. This behaviour of Joinville so incensed the king against him, that he reproached me for the too great interest I took in the affairs of that family, and ordered me to concern myself less with them for the future; and instead of revoking his sentence, he now declared that the prisoner should be again examined before he was enlarged. This renewed Joinville's former fears; he promised to make a fuller confession than he had yet done; but being, as he said, apprehensive that his majesty was still angry with him, he again entreated that I might be the person to whom he spoke.

---

* Claude de Lorraine, fourth son to Henry duke of Guise, who was killed at Blois; he was afterwards duke de Chevreuse, and died in 1657.

The duke of Bouillon took care not to return from his estates, as he had promised the king; therefore, after Biron was arrested, his majesty judged it necessary to write to him, to see if upon this occasion he would not give some proof of his connexion with the prisoner: he informed him, that marshal Biron had been convicted of conspiring against the state; and that when he came to court, he would shew him the proofs of his treason, and acquaint him with all the particulars of it; satisfying himself with thus insinuating that he expected the performance of his promise, without giving him a direct order to come. The duke of Bouillon easily comprehended the design of this letter, and answered it no otherwise, than by sending a gentleman of his retinue immediately to his majesty, to congratulate him upon the danger he had escaped. By this person he sent a letter to me, in which he carefully avoided saying any thing of which the least advantage could be taken, either because he had already learnt that his associate was seized, or that his imagination suggested to him immediately the behaviour which it was proper for him to assume. He told me, that never had any one's astonishment equalled his, when he learned that the state and the king's person had been in danger; that his fidelity and the readiness he shewed to go to every place where his duty and the king's service called him, would, he hoped, convince his majesty, that he should never have the like reason to be apprehensive of him; and that he would expect the king's orders and my good advice, that he might obey the one, and follow the other. The whole letter was conceived in terms such as these: he could not, however, avoid hinting something in favour of the accused, but in a manner so general as could not hurt him. After expressing his wishes, that this event might not give his majesty any disturbance, he added these words, "nor alter the natural sweetness of his disposition."

The king, when I shewed him this letter, thought he might make use of it to draw Bouillon to court, for he durst not send him an absolute command to come, lest, by a refusal, he should lay himself under the necessity of punishing him for his disobedience by the force of arms, which he neither chose nor could conveniently do; he therefore told me that since Bouillon asked my advice concerning what it was proper for him to do in this conjuncture, I should reply, that it was true, the king had been informed he was not wholly unacquainted with the duke of Biron's intrigues, but that this ought to strengthen his resolution of coming to his majesty, either to justify his innocence, or, by confessing his fault, to obtain a pardon for it; and that I should assure him, that I would give him my word, or, if necessary, become his surety; that so far from having any thing to fear, he should be received by the king with open arms. Henry knowing my delicacy on these occasions, prevented my scruples, by telling me, that he would engage his royal word that Bouillon should be treated in whatever manner I promised him: and not satisfied with this verbal assurance, he gave me a writing conceived in these terms: "I "promise to M. de Rosny, that if the duke of "Bouillon comes to court upon his letters and the "promises he shall make him, I will observe them "all faithfully, or give the duke free leave to retire "wherever he pleases; and neither in his journey "to or from the court shall he receive any molestation; for all which I engage my faith and royal "word to the said M. de Rosny. Given at Paris, "June 24, 1602."

I wrote to the duke of Bouillon, and without telling him of the engagement his majesty had entered into with me concerning him, pressed him in the strongest terms, and by every argument I thought could have any weight with him, to come and settle for some time at court. This letter Bouillon received almost at the same time with the verbal answer the king sent him by his deputy, and took occasion, from his majesty's not having himself pressed him to come, to tell me in answer, that the advice I gave him being inconsistent with the king's orders, he could not govern himself by it, whatever inclination he might have to do so; and that he would content himself with sending to court, as his majesty required, a person who should give as satisfactory an account of his conduct as he himself could do, and who ought to be equally depended upon. This person was a gentleman named Rignac, who accordingly came to court about the same time that I received Bouillon's answer to my letter, and whose expenses were all defrayed, as if his journey had been of great importance, because, in appearance, he came by his majesty's orders: but the duke of Bouillon, instead of coming himself, removed still farther from court, and went to Castres.

I am not surprised that my arguments had, on this occasion, so little weight with him, since he regarded me as his enemy, and did not scruple to call me so in public; nor was the king ignorant that this was his opinion, having informed me of it himself in a letter dated the 28th day of December this year: nor was I more surprised at the manner in which the duke of Bouillon acted with his majesty. As soon as he perceived (which was no difficult matter for him to do) that the king had recourse to dissimulation with him, he supposed it easy enough to impose upon his majesty and his council without risking any danger; for this purpose, all that was necessary was, to answer, in appearance,* always with great submission, without taking any of those measures, which they durst not formally prescribe to him. This artifice succeeded so well, that he made use of it a long time. Nothing could be conceived in more modest or respectful terms, than the letter he wrote on this subject to Du-Maurier; and which, after his majesty had perused it, was given to me to be communicated to the chancellor and the duke d'Epernon, with whom, by the king's orders, I treated this affair methodically. The king strongly interested himself in it, and had a conference with Constant and Saint-Aubin about the duke of Bouillon, which lasted a whole afternoon, but it produced nothing.

The game which upon this occasion was played by the king of Spain and the duke of Savoy was still more uncommon. All the foreign powers in alliance with Henry, more especially England and Scotland, whose ambassadors were still at Paris, congratulated his majesty upon his having so happily crushed this dangerous conspiracy. Philip and Charles-Emanuel appeared more eager than any of the others to compliment the king upon this event: unless fear was their motive, it is not easy to guess what could induce them to have recourse to so gross an artifice. Henry was more sincere with them; he signified to them, that he was well informed of the part they both had in the plot; all the blame of which they threw upon the count of Fuentes, as boldly, as if it had been possible to have persuaded him that this Spaniard would have dared, without their permission, to act in concert with Biron and the other conspirators.

---

* The duke de Bouillon's letters to the king we find in the 3d volume of Villeroi's Memoires d'Etat, p. 158, et seq. See likewise the reasons which the historians of his life adduced, to clear him of the accusation of having been concerned in marshal de Biron's plot, his refusing to come and wait upon the king, and his flight to Castres Liv. v. p. 222, et seq.

The king, some days after the execution of marshal Biron, coming to the Arsenal, I had a conversation with him, which well deserves to be related: "You see," said he to me, after making some reflections, as usual, upon the ingratitude of messieurs de Biron, d'Auvergne, de Bouillon, and other three of the most considerable noblemen of the court, whom he had pardoned, and whose names he mentioned, "you see that those on whom I have "bestowed the greatest favours, are the same per-"sons by whose ambition and caprice I have suffered "the most." He then observed to me, that these six men had, at different times, received larger sums from him, than the five kings his predecessors, except Henry III. who had been accused of such great prodigality, had given to their favourites. Henry added, that to silence those who always unreasonably enumerated the services of these six noblemen, he would have me draw up a memorial of all the rewards they had received from him since they had entered into his service; in which he did not pretend to include any thing but those presents that his liberality only had induced him to make them, and not such possessions as they had acquired by his assistance, and enjoyed through his protection;

such, for example, was the principality of Sedan, for which Bouillon was doubly obliged to him, having first procured it, and then secured him the possession of it, as has been seen, on an occasion sufficiently perplexing.*

The king, whose sole view in entering upon this subject was to make a particular application of it to me, told me, that by this discourse, which might have some relation to the present state of my fortune, he had no intention to give me a lesson, being too well persuaded of my fidelity to think there was any occasion for it; but that having seriously reflected upon the manner in which it was necessary he should behave to me, that he might not expose himself to the mortification of seeing the confidence he had in me lessened, he thought prudence required that he should take two precautions, with respect to me, in the rewards my services and family deserved from him; "One of these precautions," continued the king, "has a reference to the world, the other to "myself: first, that these rewards should neither "succeed each other so rapidly, nor in themselves "be so excessive, as to render you the object of "public hatred, always ready to break out against "first ministers: and the second, that these estates "and these honours should be of such a nature, as, "if it should happen that through religion, or any "other motive, you should be capable of violating "your duty, they may not put you into a condition "of giving any umbrage to your benefactor him- "self, or, after his death, of disturbing the tran- "quillity of his successor, or of putting the state in "danger: in one word," said he, (after giving me to understand, that as he spoke without any disguise, he would permit me to tell him my sentiments freely, likewise,) "I would take from myself the least occa-"sion of suspicion against you, that my friendship "for you may continue unalterable. I daily expe-"rience so many instances of ingratitude, which I "never expected, that, contrary to my inclinations, "I am obliged to be distrustful. Do not imagine, "therefore, that I will put you in possession of great "cities and strong fortresses, which, in the high "credit you are in, and the great abilities you are "master of, might make you independent of me, and "enable you, whenever you pleased, to throw the "kingdom into confusion. I cannot do more for you "than ought to be done for a servant, however faith-"ful he may be, by a prince who has his honour, his "reputation, and the interest of his people at heart."

---

* See p. 3.

Henry, without giving me time to reply, added, that till proper opportunities offered for completing my fortune, he, from this moment, would join to my salaries and pensions, which were only sufficient to answer the expenses of my table and house, an extraordinary gratuity of sixty thousand livres a year; that by uniting this sum to my own estate, I might purchase more lands, build upon them, furnish and embellish my new houses, and settle my children more advantageously; telling me graciously, that he still reserved to himself to give me other proofs of his friendship and liberality: "and this," pursued he, "I shall do with the more willingness, as "I am assured you will not squander these sums "foolishly on entertainments, dogs, horses, birds, "and mistresses."

During this long discourse of Henry's, my mind was agitated with various thoughts, which made me listen to him in silence; the reflections it occasioned left me still more moved with his freedom, and the confidence he reposed in me, than discontented with a caution which many others, in my situation, would have thought excessive. The king having commanded me to be very sincere in my reply, I told him, that although I had at this moment an absolute certainty in my own mind, that neither his majesty, nor his successors, nor the state, would ever have any cause for those apprehensions of me which his wisdom had suggested, yet I myself did not think he carried it too far; it being, in my opinion, one of the chief maxims of government, that a prince ought never to deliver himself up blindly to one person, whatever services he may have received from him, since it is next to impossible that any one should be able to answer for the wisdom and justness of his counsels for the future: therefore, instead of thinking myself injured, I found cause, in all his majesty had said, to admire his prudence, and to acknowledge his goodness, since whatever bounds he should prescribe to his favours, they would always equally exceed my expectations and my services.

As I could not doubt but that the malignant insinuations of the courtiers, who were jealous of my favour with his majesty, had some share in those fears he expressed of me, I seized this opportunity to explain myself on an article, which, from this moment, I foresaw I should be under a necessity of returning to more than once. I begged his majesty would permit me to represent to him, that he ought not to give faith to the poisonous reports of informers, without having first had good proofs of my crime, and giving me an opportunity of defending myself. I assured him, that he would find me sincere enough to confess my faults, which alone deserved that he should treat me in this manner; and that he should be convinced that what my enemies imputed to criminal views, could but at most amount to a failing, which I would not scruple to confess that instant, and for which I had some occasion for his indulgence; and this was, that, through impatience of any obstacle or delay in any resolution that I judged necessary to be taken, some words of complaint or anger might escape me against the too easy disposition of his majesty, of which my enemies would not fail to take advantage, although the purity of my intentions might be easily perceived in the words themselves which served for a foundation for the calumny.

What I then said to the king I now repeat to my readers, and not through an affectation of modesty, which may hold the place of justification; I am conscious I have no occasion for it; but because that, however irreproachable my conduct may have been, I have, nevertheless, been more than once obliged to clear myself to the prince whom I served: if this confession does not hinder them from denying me that justice I have merited, it will not make them judge less favourably of Henry, if they attend to the conjunctures and maxims of the times in which we both lived: and at all times, there is nothing against which it is so difficult to defend one's self, as the secret machinations of envious courtiers: what effect might they not be expected to produce in the mind of a prince, who could collect a thousand examples of treachery, disloyalty, and disobedience to himself, and hardly one of real attachment? To judge clearly of the sentiments which Henry entertained for me, we must not consider him in those moments when the remembrance of so many instances of ingratitude, awakened by the most artful impostures, opened his heart, in spite of him, to distrust and suspicion; but, when recovered from those impressions which the plots they endeavoured to involve me in had made on his mind, he gave me the sincerest proofs of his tenderness, and esteem. The world therefore may judge as it pleases of those little disgraces which I have been obliged to sustain during the course of what will be called my glory and prosperity, and which, probably, any other might have suppressed, for the honour of having it said, that he directed as he pleased the inclinations of his master; on this subject I shall use neither disguise nor concealment, for truth is my guide, and instruction is my end.

II. The duke of Luxembourg having had a cause brought before the parliament this year, the advocates who pleaded for him had the assurance to exact fifteen hundred crowns for their fees. The duke complained of this extortion to the king, who ordered the parliament to issue out an arret, by which the lawyers fees were reduced and settled, and they obliged to give receipts for all the money they received, and a general receipt for whatever papers were put into their hands, that they might be constrained to deliver up these, which they generally kept till their demands were satisfied. The necessity of putting a curb to the avarice of these people had always appeared so strong, that the States had already given the same orders,* but to no purpose. The parliament granted the arret that was demanded of them, but the lawyers, instead of submitting to it, went, three or four hundred of them, to return into the public register the ensigns of their office, which produced a total cessation of all law proceedings. There was almost a general murmur throughout Paris, particularly among pragmatical coxcombs and *badauds*,* a set of wretches with which the town is crowded, who taking upon them to be wiser than the king, the peers, and the states of the kingdom, decided against them in favour of the advocates,† and found some abettors, even at court, who, with so much power and art exaggerated an evil, petty in itself, and easily remedied, that the king was stunned with their clamours, and began to be in pain about the consequence.

---

* Ordonnance de Blois, art. 162.

While this affair was yet in agitation, his majesty being one day in his closet conversing with some of the courtiers, and relating the continual solicitations that were made him in favour of the advocates, " Faith, sire, I am not surprised at it," said Sigogne, raising his voice, and assuming the air of one in a violent passion; " these men make it plainly " appear that they know not how to employ their " time, since they disturb themselves so much " about a trifle: to hear their exclamations, one " would think the state would be ruined, without " these bawlers; as if the kingdom under Charlemagne, and so many other great kings, during " whose reigns neither advocates nor attorneys were " heard of, was not in as flourishing a condition as " it is at present, when we are devoured by these " vermin." Sigogne afterwards, to prove that the establishment of advocates in France was not very ancient, produced the register of the chancery, of which the first paper is intitled, *A permission to plead causes by an advocate;* and, perceiving that he was listened to with pleasure, he added, that this science was established to the ruin of the nobility and the people, and the destruction of trade and agriculture: "There is not," said he, "any artist, or even "any simple labourer, that is not of more use to the "community, than this swarm of men, who enrich "themselves by our follies, and the artifices they "have invented to stifle truth, throw down all right, "and darken reason. If we are so blind," continued he, with a vivacity truly diverting, "that we will "not, and so unhappy that we cannot, do without "them, nothing remains to be done but to command them to resume the exercise of their employment within eight days at farthest, upon the "conditions prescribed by the court, under pain of "being obliged to return to the shop or the plough "which they have quitted, or else to serve the "state in Flanders, with a musquet upon their "shoulders. I'll answer for it, if this method be "taken with them, we shall soon see them run with "eagerness to resume these magnificent ensigns, "like vermin towards a heap of wheat."

---

* Such as are styled cockneys at London.

† Matthieu, in relating this incident, tom. II. liv. iii. p. 478 seems in like manner, to take the part of the advocates, and yet, for all this, every good man must be of the duke of Sully's opinion. In the sequel of these Memoirs, he proposes the means of considerably diminishing the number of processes; and it is for this that endeavours ought, indeed, to be chiefly used for business, to remedy the abuses of which he complains.

There was not one in the company who could forbear smiling at this lively sally of Sigogne, and the king was among the first, and confessed that his arguments were very convincing: but whether it was that he suffered himself to be overcome by the solicitations* that were made him, or alarmed by the fears of the consequences that might attend his joining this new disorder to those troubles by which the kingdom was then agitated, or that, as he afterwards declared, he had reserved to himself the making one day such a general regulation in this affair, that not only the advocates, but the attorneys and the whole body of the law should be comprehended in it, he consented that the arret should, for this time, continue without effect: and thus was this ludicrous business terminated, for reflections upon which, I refer the reader to Sigogne's own words: so the world was left to think that it was I who made him speak them.*

---

* The medium made use of by the king's people, who secretly favoured the advocates in this affair, was, that the king should send new letters to the parliament, whereby the advocates were ordered to resume and continue their functions, on condition, however, of obeying the arrets of parliament, and the ordinances of the states.

This naturally leads me to take notice of the

But, as these letters did at the same time allow them to make such remonstrances as they should think reasonable, with regard to the exercise of their several employments, and as they were particularly assured that they might act as before, they had no difficulty to submit thereto. De Thou, liv. cxxviii. Sept. an. 1602.

* Le Journal d'Henry IV. relates a little piece of history which I shall set down here. Henry when hunting once on the side of Grosbois, quitted his company, as he frequently did, and came by himself to Creteil, a league on the other side of the bridge of Charenton, and that at noon-day, and as hungry as a hunter. Going into an inn, he enquired of the landlady if she had any thing for him to eat, to which she answered No, and that he was come too late, taking him only for a private gentleman. Henry then asked her, For whom is this roast meat I see at the fire? For some gentlemen, replies she, that are above, and whom I take to be solicitors. The king sent, in a civil manner, to ask them to let him have a piece of their roast meat, or to give him leave to sit at one end of their table upon paying for it, both which they refused him. Upon this, Henry sent privately for Vitry, and eight or ten more of his attendants, whom he ordered to seize the solicitors, and carry them away to Grosbois to have them well whipped, to teach them more complaisance to gentlemen another time. "This the said sieur Vitry "saw punctually and speedily performed," says the author, "notwithstanding all the arguments, entreaties, and remonstrances of "the lawyers."

great law-suit commenced this year by the third estate of Dauphiné, against the clergy and nobility, upon the manner in which the taxes were settled and assized in this province: myself, together with thirteen other commissioners, chosen amongst persons of the highest distinction in the kingdom, were named to take cognizance of it, but it was six years before it could be decided; the animosity between the parties concerned was so great, that there was a necessity for sending a second time to obtain information upon the spot. I took a more speedy method to bring a man named Jousseaume to justice; he had been a receiver-general in the revenue, and, becoming a bankrupt, had carried off a great deal of the royal money. I caused him to be seized at Milan, whither he had retired, and he was hanged on a gibbet. All crimes that draw along with them the ruin of a multitude of families, cannot be too severely punished. The king again shewed himself solicitous for the interest of his finances, in the affair of the receivers and treasurers-general of Burgundy: some draughts had been made on them for the charges of garrisons and works of fortifications, which they had not paid, either through negligence, or with a bad design. I advised his majesty to send thither a commissioner on whose probity he could depend; he did so, and he began by suspending those men from their employments, and performed himself the duties of treasurer. The money that was expended upon this occasion was raised out of the salaries of these receivers and treasurers, "That I," said Henry, "may not pay "the penalty for the fault they have committed "against my service and their duty."

To prevent the exportation of gold and silver coin I found a method less tedious and severe than punishments and confiscations, which was only to raise their value,* there being no reason why they should be carried out of the kingdom, but that they would pass for more in the neighbouring countries than at home. At the same time, I settled, throughout the kingdom, the way of reckoning by livres, instead of crowns, as had been till then the practice: by some this may be thought an useless refinement,

---

* The crown called écu d'or au soleil, which was valued at sixty sols tournois, was raised to sixty-five; that called écu pistolet of fifty-eight sols, to sixty-two, and so of the other gold specie: the silver franc of twenty sols was raised one sol and four deniers, and the rest in proportion. It was in the month of September that this double ordonnance passed, about the raising the value of money, and the re-establishing of reckoning by livres; for the reckoning by crowns had only taken place about twenty-five years before, that is, since the ordonnance of 1577, which had abrogated the reckoning by livres. Matthieu very highly approves of both these regulations of the duke of Sully, tom. II. liv. iii. p. 540. Le Blanc, on the contrary, says, p. 351, 372, et seq. that, whatever cogent reasons they might have had for abrogating the famous ordonnance of 1577, it was very ill done, either with regard to the money itself, because the gold and silver specie were afterwards raised as much in seven years alone, as they had been during the space of seventy-five years before; or with regard to commerce, because that goods and merchandise were proportionably enhanced in their prices. The opinion of this last writer seems to me to be grounded upon stronger reasons. The reckoning by crowns had been in favour of those who had their revenues in silver, those who improved their money in the public funds and otherwise, and those who sold goods upon credit, payable at a certain time: the ordonnance of 1577 secured the effects of a considerable number of the natives; and besides, if there had been any confusion found in the coin, this neither was, nor could be, the cause of it, but only the miserable condition into which the civil wars had reduced France. The duke of Sully projected the two regulations here spoken of, to prevent those disorders, which were, according to him, the too great plenty of foreign specie, that, in commerce, occupied the place of our own; secondly, the enhancement of the price of merchants goods; and, lastly, the exportation of the gold and silver coin to our neighbours. It was equally easy to have made him sensible, that his complaints, in all these respects, signified nothing, any more than the remedy which he applied to them. We have already shewn, a little higher, in what way it is that this quantity of foreign coin, which abounds

---

in our commerce, is an advantage; and if it could be called an evil, the augmentation of the nominal value of coin, in reckonings, to which he has recourse, would be more proper to heighten than lessen it.

As to the raising of the price of goods, the same augmentation could not but make way for it still more; and the reason for obviating it, which he draws from the computation by livres, will appear to every one very insufficient, and even frivolous. Moreover, it appears to me, that the enhancing of the price of goods follows as a necessary consequence and effect of the multiplication of gold and silver in Europe, since the discovery of America. In order to prevent it, we must have prohibited all commerce, not only with Spain, whose mines furnish us now with these metals, but also with all our own neighbours, among whom they circulate as well as among us. A state that should be conducted upon this principle, would make the same figure among the other states of Europe, as the republic of Lacedemon did with respect to the rest of Greece. The only thing to be attended to, and which is of very great consequence, is, that all the merchandise and goods, and generally whatever constitutes a part of commerce, should rise at the same time and in the same proportion in value. If the production of manufactures be enhanced without raising the price of corn, for example, then agriculture is neglected. If the wages of journeymen be not proportioned to the one and the other, those people can no longer live and pay the taxes. As to the exporting of coin out of the kingdom, which seems to have been the chief view of the duke of Sully, it is true, that the augmentation of its current value in reckoning might, in some measure, prevent it, by annihilating or diminishing the profit of the dealers in bullion; and, apparently, this was the only reason that determined him. The narrow views of his age, with regard to the finances, and still more as to commerce, did not allow him to see that he destroyed a slight corruption by one a great deal more considerable, nor suffer him to go up to the source of the evil: he would have perceived that the advantage of commerce, and consequently the greatest quantity of gold and silver, will remain in that nation which shall have made all others depend most upon them for riches, either natural or ac-since all the ways of reckoning must come to the same thing at last: I am, however, of opinion, experience having shewn me, that the custom of talking always of crowns, for want of a denomination of

quired; and that as long as the balance of trade shall be in favour of some one neighbouring nation, this prohibition of exporting gold and silver is neither reasonable nor practicable. At present, when we begin to see a little more clearly into these matters, there is no one but agrees, that all these regulations, and this whole train of reasoning, did not reach the end proposed. Though the exigency of circumstances, which is almost endless, does not permit either the providing against, or the subjecting every thing to a single rule, we may, however, aver, that on the article of money and commerce, there are two general and very simple maxims which may be looked upon as invariable; and these are, to avoid, with the greatest care imaginable, meddling with the coin, and endeavour continually to render the French as laborious, industrious, and frugal as possible. The frequent variations in the coin give mortal wounds both to domestic and foreign trade, by the extinction of credit, the shutting up of private purses, the embarrassment and disadvantage of exchange, and the ruin of estates: all this is palpable and obvious. To this we may add, that the king, who appears to be the only one who gains by such proceedings, to put the case impartially, always loses considerably more thereby than he gains; besides, that the insolvency of his subjects is an evil which he always shares with them, and even feels much longer than they do; all his expenses increase with the coin, so as not to be diminished even when that does.

The other principle has still less need of proof. It seems, that nature has reserved to France the sovereignty of trade, from the advantage of her situation, and the goodness of her soil, which obliges a great part of her neighbours to have recourse to her, for all those things that supply the first and essential necessaries of life: she has no more to do than to share, at least equally with them, in the commerce of all those things that serve but for mere conveniency, or which luxury has introduced into Europe. If the consumption of the latter should exceed the produce of the former, we shall complain unjustly of our condition; for to pretend to hinder the exportation of our materials of gold and silver to foreigners, when we are ourselves indebted to these foreigners, is endeavouring to make the effect cease, without removing the cause; but to set a money more convenient for petty traffic, had imperceptibly raised all that was bought or sold to more than its real value.

Frenchman to commerce that is carried on by sea, to manufactures and arts, to hinder him as much as possible from expending too much on things that come from abroad, and which are but superfluities, and, on the other hand, to increase his own riches, by encouraging the cultivation of his lands; this is what we may truly call promoting the interest of trade. Besides le Blanc and Matthieu, consult on the subject of this note de Thou, liv. cxxix. Le Grain, liv. viii. Perefixe, and other writers of that time, in order to find out the history of these regulations of the finances and commerce; for in reality the reasonings of these writers on this whole matter are but little satisfactory: we might well say of them what the duke of Sully said of the parliament of Paris, "They are mas- "ters of arts which none of them know any thing of." Memoires pour l'Hist. de France.

As M. de Sully treats no more of money, I will supply that part from the same memoirs, tom. II. p. 275, et seq. Though this writer seems not even to understand the state of the question, and speaks not very favourably of the king and his ministers. "At that "time," says he, speaking of all the deliberations which were entered into upon this subject in 1609, "there was brought upon the "carpet, and proposed to the council, a new edict for the coin, "which they wanted to diminish and alter, that is, to raise its "value, and by the same means to ruin the people. Every one "murmured at this proposal: the king alone finding his account in "it, laughed at it, and at all the world, even at his own ministers, "and their remonstrances, as he did at the first president of the "mint (William Le-Clerc), who being disconcerted in his speech, "having been twice interrupted by his majesty's breaking into a "fit of laughter, which made him stop short in the middle thereof; "and upon his majesty's observing it, he says to him, 'Go on, Mr. "president, for I am not laughing at you, but at my cousin, the "count of Soissons, who is near me, and tells me, that he smells a "shoulder of mutton.' This second stroke struck him quite dumb. "Upon which, the king falling into a fit of laughter, went away and "left him. A native of Perigord, who was one of the principal "persons that had communicated this project of the edict to the "king, pressed much for its being put in execution. The king, "who very well knew the iniquity of the edict, seeing himself con-

The interest of commerce was still more concerned in the intelligence the king received from several parts of the kingdom, that those who had been employed to search for mines, had discovered a great number of gold and silver ones.* This report

---

" tinually teased by this rude contractor, at length asked him what " countryman he was; to which he answered, I am a native of " Perigord. *Ventresaint-gris!* replies the king, I always thought so; " for in that country they are all false coiners.—On Saturday, the " 5th of September, the court being met on the *edit de monies*, re- " jected it entirely; *Nec debemus, nec possumus*, we neither ought, " nor can, concluded they with one voice. The gentlemen belonging " to the mint were sent for; among whom one of the reformed re- " ligion, called Bizeul, spoke his sentiments very freely, for which " he was highly commended: and M. le premier president said, " *Non in parabolis iste locutus est nobis*, He has not spoken to us in " parables. It must be observed, that as soon as the people belong- " ing to the coinage had entered the chamber, the first president said " to them, sit down and be covered, and you shall speak presently. " On Tuesday the 8th, in the evening, M. de Sully went to see the " first president, in order to prevail on him to persuade the court " to pass the edicts; but in this he found him inflexible: and as the " president represented to him the injustice of it, M. de Sully " answered, 'The king ought not to look upon that as unjust which " suits his affairs.'—On Tuesday the 15th of September, the king " sent letters patent to the court, to prolong the parliament for " eight days, during which time they were ordered to set about the " registering of the edicts, two of which were in a manner revoked; " and as to the others, it was hoped they would die of themselves."

* Le Septennaire mentions the places where these different mines were discovered: " In the Pyrennees mines of talc and copper, " together with some of gold and silver; in the mountains of Foix, " mines of jet and precious stones, and even carbuncles, though but " few: in the lands of Gevaudan, in the Cevennes, mines of lead " and tin; in those of Carcassone, mines of silver; in those of " Auvergne, mines of iron; in the Lyonnois, near the village Saint " Martin, of gold and silver; in Normandy, silver and very good " tin; at Annonay in the Vivarais, mines of lead; in La Brie and " Picardy, mines of marcasite, of gold and silver. Some of these " mines, but especially those of gold and silver, are very difficult " and troublesome to work, and at the same time of so little profit,

was spread at court, with so many appearances of probability, that every one representing to himself the direction of this new labour as a source of immense riches, there was not one who did not use his utmost endeavours to procure the grant of it. Monsieur Le Grand obtained the office of superintendant, and Beringham that of comptroller-general. This gave occasion for La Regnardiere, a buffoon whose jests were equally satyrical and agreeable, to say, "that they could not have made a fitter choice "of a man for the direction of the mines, than one "who was himself a composition of *mines*.*" The improvement and working of silk, of which I shall have more occasion to speak in the following year, commenced in this, and an edict was published for the planting of mulberry trees.

Among all these different edicts, none made so much noise as that against duels.† His majesty went so far as to make death the punishment of those who disobeyed; in which, I confess, he acted contrary to my advice. I have too plainly declared my thoughts of this pernicious and savage abuse, to fear the accusation of having endeavoured to tolerate it; but I foresaw, that an excess of severity in

---

"that M. de Thou had reason for dissuading them from meddling "with them ever since that time." liv. cxxix.

* The jest lies in the word *mines*, which in French signifies grimace and affectation.

† This edict, in which duelling is declared to be high treason, or *leze majesté*, was passed at Blois in the month of June, and is a very severe one; this is the edict which first gave the constables and marshals of France a power of prohibiting violent methods, and appointing the reparation of the injuries received. This the parliament restricted, in the registering to those rencounters alone that concerned the point of honour, and excepted all other crimes as debts, assaults, &c. M. de Sully, in the course of these Memoirs, handles this affair of duelling at greater length.

the means would be the principal obstacle to the execution. When it becomes necessary to declare the will of the sovereign to the subject, it is of the utmost importance to examine carefully, whether the thing to be forbidden is of such a nature that the fear of death may prevent disobedience; for otherwise those extremities are, in my opinion, less efficacious than degradation or disgrace, or even than a pretty high fine or forfeiture. If the practice of duelling be seriously attended to, it will be found to be of this nature; for it is commonly persons of quality, and even of the greatest distinction, who are guilty of it; for whom solicitations are so much the more ardent and successful, as the punishment with which they are threatened is great and infamous: it is not, therefore, to be doubted, that many pardons will be granted, the example and the hope of which are sufficient to encourage others to infringe the law. It often happens, that those punishments are most regarded, for which a pardon dare not, nor cannot be implored.

Besides those embassies I mentioned at the beginning of this year, the king received a solemn deputation from the thirteen Swiss Cantons: forty-two deputies from that nation came to Paris to renew the alliance * which had been the occasion of marshal Biron's journey to those Cantons. I was appointed, together with Sillery, de Vic, and Caumartin, to treat with them; but not being able, on account of my other employments, to attend this business constantly, I satisfied myself with getting exact informations from Sillery of all that passed at

---

* See all the ceremonies of entries, audiencies, and performances of oaths, which were observed on this occasion, in le Septennaire, ann. 1602. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. iii. p. 471, &c.

their meetings. The only difficulty I started, was concerning the three millions that were granted them, besides the forty thousand crowns to which their usual pension was raised: I could have wished that they had deducted certain sums paid on their account, during the campaign in Savoy, and on some other occasions; as for the rest, these gentlemen thought good cheer, and deep drinking with them, the most essential parts of their reception. The king presented them with gold chains and medals, and sent back the pope's chamberlain, who came to compliment him in the name of his holiness, loaded with presents: he gave his consent at the same time to the alliance which the republic of Venice made with the Grisons against Spain.

The great armaments and other warlike preparations which that power was making for the following year, kept the crown of France in continual attention to their motions, and were the cause that Henry, who held it for an incontestable truth, that it was by military power alone a state could be rendered flourishing, not only rejected the proposal I made him, to disband part of his troops, particularly to lessen the number of his guards by twelve or fifteen hundred men, but also took a resolution to make a new levy of six thousand Swiss: and it was with great difficulty that I prevailed upon him to defer this levy till the month of September. He was more solicitous than ever about the payment of his army, and I was obliged to the constable for having solicited with great earnestness the payment of my company of gens-d'armes. And at last he determined to take another journey to Calais, which was the most considerable of all his majesty made this year, except that into the provinces.

Henry took his route through Verneuil[*] towards the latter end of the month of August, leaving his queen in the same condition she was the preceding year, that is, far advanced in her pregnancy, for she lay in of Madame, her eldest daughter, in November.[†] He recommended to me with great earnestness to be assiduous about her, and endeavour to make her approve of this journey, as likewise to procure her every kind of diversion that might alleviate her concern during the first days of his absence. He never wrote to me without making inquiry about the state of her health, and the manner in which she passed her time: and it may be truly said, that he never omitted giving her every instance of respect and tenderness that was able to make her forget the uneasiness she received from his amours. It was about this time that he legitimated the son he had by the marchioness de Verneuil,[‡] which was among the number of those things that gave the greatest offence to the queen. Henry was detained a short time at Monceaux by a fever, occasioned by a cold he caught in walking late in the evening to see his masons work; the remedy he made use of was to go to the chase next day. As soon as I had acquainted him at Boulogne, that every thing relating to the queen was in such a situation as he wished, he wrote to me to come thither to him, with the president Jeannin, whom he expected to have occasion for.

---

[*] Verneuil near Senlis, a castle which he had given to his mistress, mademoiselle d'Entragues, and from which she took the title of marchioness of Verneuil.

[†] Elizabeth, a daughter of France, was born on the 22d of November, 1602, and married to Philip IV. of Spain in 1615.

[‡] Henry de Bourbon, duke de Verneuil: he was at first bishop of Metz, and afterwards married Charlotte Seguire.

It was from this place that his majesty was a witness of part of the event and exploits of the campaign between the Spaniards and the Flemish, without having any inclination to disarm, whatever assurance might be given him by the king of Spain, till he had seen what turn affairs would take in the Low Countries, where, however, they still continued to be on the same footing as before. The siege of Ostend was not carried on with so much vigour by the besiegers, as it was sustained by the besieged. Prince Maurice of Nassau, after continuing some time at Berg, uncertain of what he should next undertake, went on the 19th of September to invest Grave, and entrenched himself, not doubting but he should receive some opposition in this enterprize. Accordingly, the admiral of Arragon, in the absence of the archduke Albert, who was detained by sickness at Brussels, endeavoured, by means of a bridge which he threw over the river, to beat up one of the quarters of the besiegers, and to succour the place; but he did not succeed: and he had even the mortification to find, that many of his Spanish companies mutinied, and, after separating from the main body of his army, possessed themselves of Hoestrate and Dele. He took such wrong methods to engage them to return, that they came to a resolution to apply to the prince of Orange, who gave them the city of Grave for a retreat, which he had taken, and which these Spaniards restored to him, when the ravages and violences they committed upon the territories of the archduke obliged him to treat with them, and to accept of very strange conditions from them.*

---

* See in the historians the particulars of all these expeditions, which are here only briefly related.

The council of Spain, through a desire of carrying on the war, resolved to make new and more vigorous efforts. A squadron of twelve large gallies and pinnaces, fitted out at Sicily with great care, manned with a sufficient number of soldiers, and plentifully supplied with all necessary provisions, sailed for this purpose out of the Spanish ports, to cruise in the channel: the command of this squadron was given to Frederick Spinola, cousin to the marquis of that name, who conducted the siege of Ostend; he flattered himself that he should become master of the sea, and complete the ruin of the Flemish. But this proved a vain hope; of twelve vessels, two of them perished ere he had quitted the coasts of Spain; the ten others, meeting with a Dutch squadron, were almost all either taken or sunk;* the last that escaped, and in which Spinola himself was, happened to run aground within view of Calais, but so disabled by the cannon, and in such a shattered condition, that the slaves who rowed it having revolted and fled, the general found himself obliged to land alone, and with great labour, at Calais, from whence he went to Brussels, to complain to the archduke of the sea and the winds.

Spain made herself amends for these misfortunes, by the acquisition of the marquisate of Final, which was taken by the count of Fuentes. There was not the least shadow of a pretence for this usurpation, this little state, which is on the coast of Genoa, being incontestably a fief of the empire; nevertheless, when the emperor, to preserve, in appearance at least, the right of the empire, offered to send commissioners to discuss this affair upon the spot, his offer was rejected with contempt by the king of Spain.* He used the same violence with regard to Piombino, a fief likewise of the empire, which afforded him a convenient port; and had likewise the same views upon Embden, when he undertook to support against the inhabitants the lord† of that city, although he was avowedly a Protestant; but in this he did not succeed: the citizens of Embden maintained their liberty against both the one and the other, and joined themselves to the states.

---

* Sir Robert Mansell, with two English ships of war, had the greatest share in the destruction of this fleet, which happened in September. Edit.

The duke of Savoy succeeded no better in the attempt he ordered d'Albigné‡ to make upon the city of Genoa. This expedition ended unfortunately for the assailants, although they had opened themselves a passage into the city, by applying soldiers to the walls, and above two hundred of them had already entered, after cutting the centinel's throat, whom they had forced to tell them the watch-word, which served them to get clear of the patrole till they had found their way through the first guard; and now they thought themselves secure of the city: but the citizens, deriving new strength and courage from the extremity they beheld themselves in, charged them with so much fury, that they drove them back, and forced them to abandon their city. Some of these Savoyards threw themselves off the walls, to escape the rage of the enemy; many others were taken and hanged without mercy. Spain entered very deep into this black design, which was followed by a peace between the duke of Savoy and the republic of Genoa.*

---

* The marquis of Final, by his importunities, obtained a pension during his life.

† He was called count d'Ost Frise. See the origin of these troubles in Chron. Sept. an. 1598, and their conclusion, an. 1602.

‡ Charles de Simiane d'Albigné. De Thou, liv. 129. Septen. an. 1602. Matthieu, ibid. 544.

The revolt of Battori from the emperor continued the war in Hungary: the duke of Nevers† went thither, in expectation of succeeding to the post and reputation of the duke of Mercœur, but laying siege to Buda after Pest had been taken by the Christians, the Turks, who on their side had at length won Alba-regalis,* hastened thither with such numerous forces, that they forced them to raise the siege; and the duke of Nevers retreated very much wounded. An action of George Baste, the imperial general, has been very much and very deservedly applauded. The rebels in Battori's party having seized Bistrith, Baste retook this place by a capitulation, which was violated during his absence by some German soldiers. As soon as he was apprised of it at his return, he hanged up all those soldiers, and out of his own money satisfied the

---

* The treaty was concluded the following year at Ramilly, through the mediation of the Swiss Cantons. Siri, ibid. p. 200.

† Charles de Gonzague, duke of Mantua, de Nevers, de Cleves, and de Rhetel, who died in 1637. See how la Chronol. Septen. relates an action, of which M. de Sully speaks with a kind of contempt. "The duke of Nevers thinking, by his own example, to "recal the courage of those who withdrew from danger, and to in"duce others to come on, went directly to the breach, trampling "over the dead, the wounded, and even those that were flying; "but he received there the shot of a large arquebuse that was fired "amidst a great number of other arms, from one of the angles of "the breach, that struck him just on the left side, penetrating "into the breast near the heart and lungs; but it was conducted so "providentially, that, neither breaking, or hurting any noble part, it "gained him as much lasting honour, as it shewed a great miracle in "his preservation." Let us likewise hear this writer concerning the death of the duke of Mercœur: "Having an inclination," says he, "to return to France, in order to prepare for some greater expedi"tion against the Turks, he went from Vienna to Prague, where he "took his leave of the emperor: but while he was at Noremberg "he was seized with a pestilential spotted fever. No sooner was "the host brought him, than the moment he saw it, though in a "languishing and weak state of body, yet of a vigorous and sound "mind, *having more faith than life* (the device of the duke of Mer"cœur being, *plus fidei quam vitæ*) he threw himself out of bed, and "falling prostrate upon the ground, adored his Saviour, uttering the "most devout ejaculations." The whole of what this author adds concerning the acts, sayings, and sentiments, of the duke of Mercœur, till the moment of his death, is quite affecting, and serves sufficiently to form a high eulogium of his character: "His funeral oration was "pronounced in the church of Notre Dame at Paris, by monsieur "François de Selles, coadjutor and bishop elect of Geneve. The "Turks imagined that the affairs of the Christians did not prosper "but wherever this prince was." After the eulogium of his family,

---

the historian passes to that of his virtues: "He was one of the "most temperate men in the world as to diet, so as only to eat "when obliged through necessity, and he drank almost nothing but "water: he was no less abstemious in other temporal enjoyments; "humble in the possession of all those high honours and great "favours heaven had heaped upon him, and never abusing any of "them; he was equally accessible to rich and poor; moderate in "his recreations; he had a great contempt for idle assemblies: so "that what time remained for amusement he employed in reading "useful books. He had an exact skill in practical mathematics; "he was also eloquent, and would gracefully deliver his elegant "sentiments not only in French, but likewise in the German, "Italian, and Spanish tongues, in which he was more than moderately skilled; and yet he never employed his elocution but to "enforce things that were useful, praiseworthy, and virtuous." The description which this writer afterwards gives, with regard to his performing the duties of religion and those of his station, his piety, his prudence, and his other virtues, forms altogether a picture which may serve for a model to the great of our times, if we except that an immoderate ambition and mistaken zeal for religion made him undertake a conspiracy against his sovereign. Matthieu, ibid. 456, speaks of him in the same manner.

* Or Albe-royale, as it is before named; it is now called Stulweissenburg. Edit.

inhabitants for the damage they had received. The rebels were so greatly affected with the generosity of this action, that they all submitted to the emperor, and demanded no other security than the general's word.

END OF VOL. II.

London: printed by W. Bulmer and Co.
Cleveland-row, St. James's.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

REC'D LD-URL
4 WK DEC. 2 0 1993
DEC 1 7 1993

315

L 005 116 801 1

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

AA 000 100 769 9